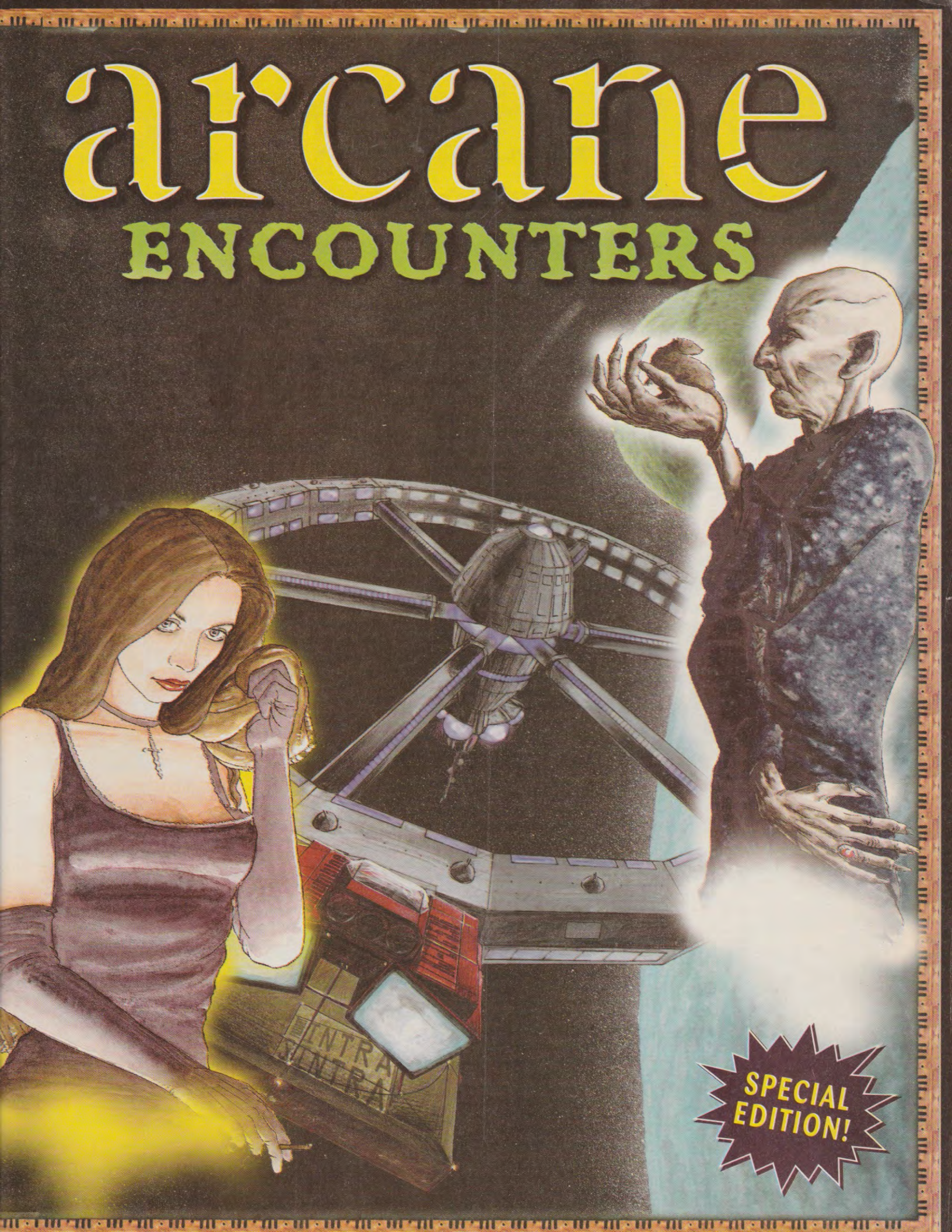
# arcane
## ENCOUNTERS



# ENCOUNTERS SPECIAL

**FREE WITH THE APRIL ISSUE OF**

# arcane

*You will find that in addition to all the original characters, stats have been included for AD&D and Fantasy Warhammer Systems, Traveller, StarWars, Call of Cthulhu and Vampire the Masquerade*

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Fantasy barbarians cut bloody swathes through endless NPCs, investigators break-and-enter... And these are the good guys? PhilMasters wants a word with them.

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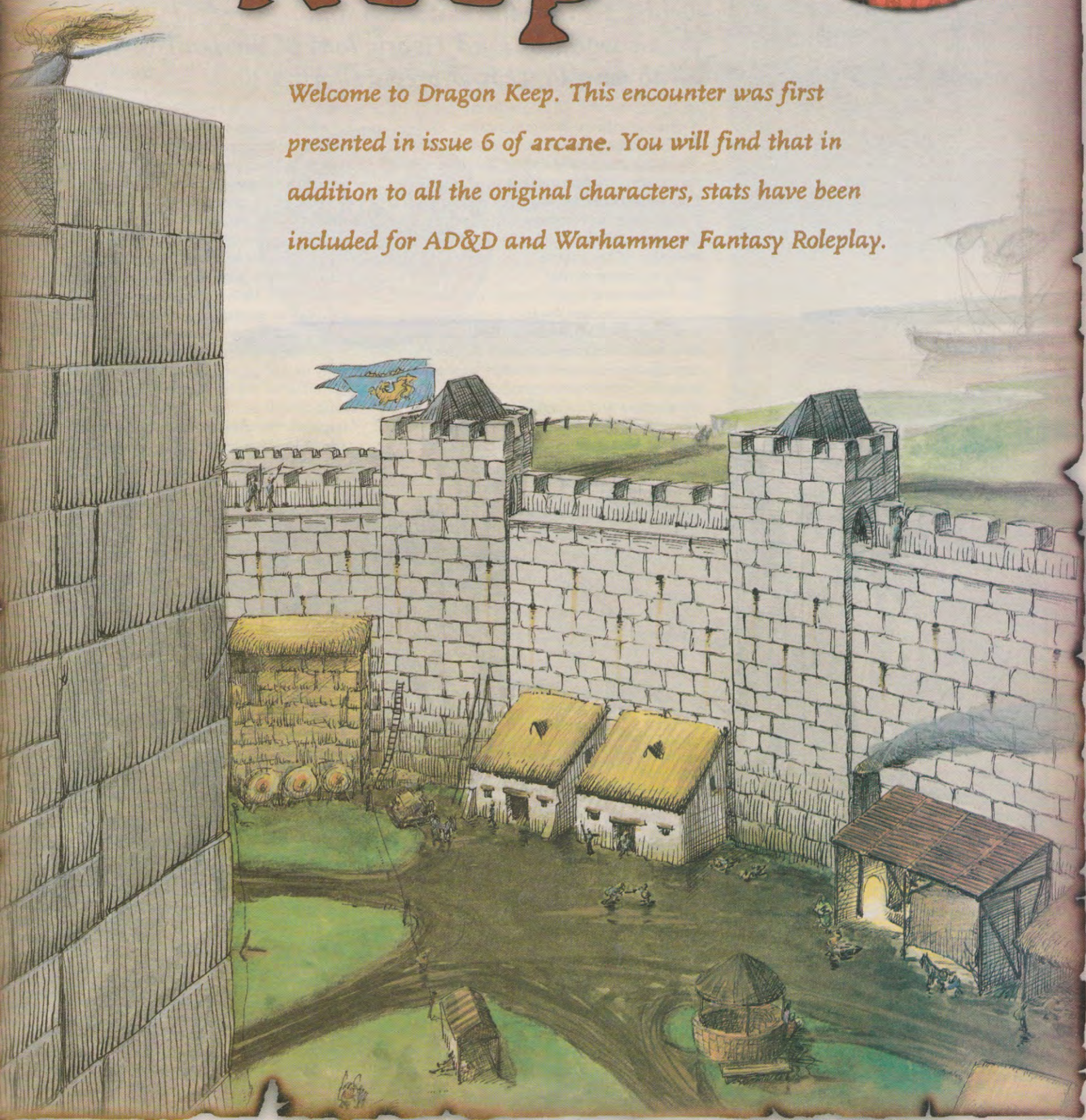
Don't just wait for the next *Magic* tournament to arrive – set up your own.

# Dragon Keep

the roleplaying magazine
arcane

- This Encounter is suitable for any gaming system
- Statistics have been supplied for Advanced Dungeons & Dragons and Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay

*Welcome to Dragon Keep. This encounter was first presented in issue 6 of arcane. You will find that in addition to all the original characters, stats have been included for AD&D and Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay.*



# Dragon

*Be drawn into the historical and heroic world of Lord Henry, lord of the Dragon Keep. Grab your lance and prepare for battle...*

A bitter wind blew in from the sea. The little castle on the hill appeared safe and secure. Its drawbridge was down and the portcullis had been drawn up. Guards waited on either side of the gate, ready to challenge any approaching visitors. On the battlements, the beautiful Lady Eleanor could be seen by all, her brightly coloured dress and scarf fluttering in the breeze.

Lord Henry, resplendent in his full armour, appeared at the gate and exchanged a few words with the guards. Then the guards bowed and he spurred his black horse on and rode off towards a ship which was at anchor in the bay. The device on his shield flashed as it caught the sun.

"A golden dragon on blue," said the beautiful Lady Arabella, as she disembarked from the ship.

"If you are to learn the ways of this land, you would say Draco or regardant on azure, I think," said her companion, Sulien. Unlike her sister, who was dressed in flowing and brilliantly coloured draperies, she wore mail and bore a shield, though it was without device.

"But I think we will like it here. I believe that is our cousin riding out to greet us, and a golden dragon is his sign."

"As long as we are safe here," said Arabella, and a touch of apprehension could be heard in her voice.

A castle is a defensive fortification which is situated so as to command as much of the surrounding land as possible. The castle had its heyday in Europe from the Norman Conquest until the invention of the cannon and gunpowder during the Renaissance.

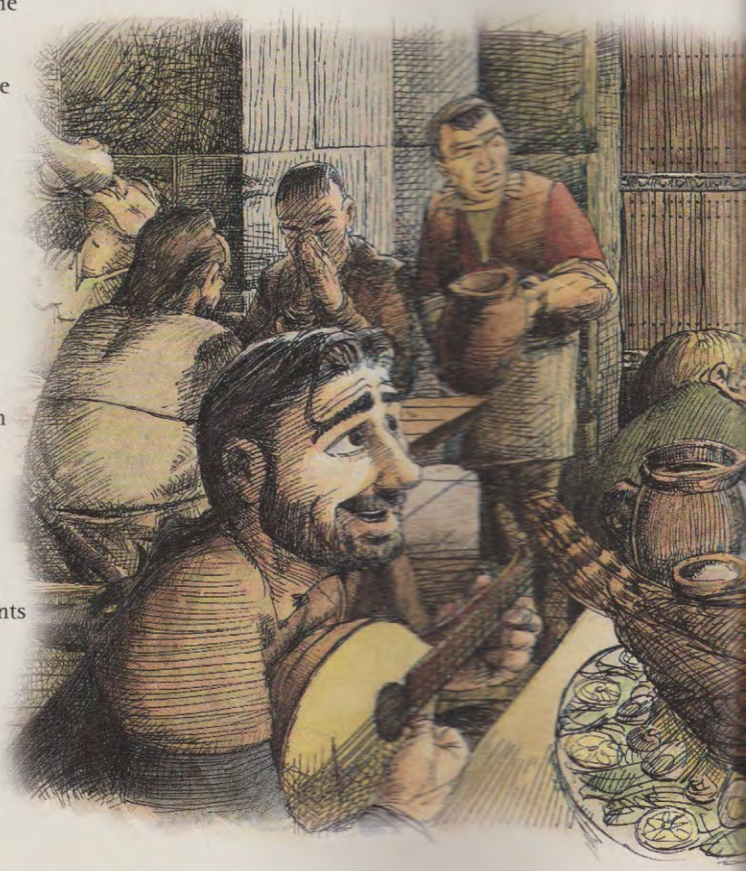
Before cannons made their strong walls useless, castles were considered to be almost impregnable, and their defenses were often bolstered with moats, portcullises, drawbridges and battlements. But castles were much more than just defensive constructions. Castles were also the homes of feudal lords and their families.

The castle is also the home of chivalry and romance. In legend, castles creep back earlier into history, to the time of King Arthur and before. They insinuate themselves anachronistically. They know where it is they belong in a mythic sense.

Historically, castles were built in conquered territory, from Ireland in the west to Russia in the east, from Scotland to the Middle East. Castles pop up in unexpected places. The Crusader castles in Greece are some of the best preserved and most fascinating examples in the world. Wherever they are found they're haunted by echoes of glory and romance, of knights, honour, tournaments and cold betrayal.

There are innumerable ways of involving a castle in an adventure. Characters can visit one, they can build one, they can try to capture one – whether directly or by treachery – and they can even inherit one or be granted one as a reward for some deed. They might come to a castle seeking work, or seeking a place of refuge.

The castle detailed here is loosely based on a typical 12th-century Norman castle. It is not set in any particular period, however, rather in the imaginary period of the dream of the Mediaeval World. It should fit in easily on the edges of any fantasy kingdom – suitable for the borders of King Arthur's realm as well as that of Richard the Lionheart. Peasants' huts may be mundane and chilly, but a castle is for heroes.



# n Keep

## Locations

### The Exterior Fortifications

There is a curtain wall around the outside of the castle, serving as a first line of defence. In times of peace, villagers and visitors can pass through to the interior with only the most cursory of challenges. In times of war, the drawbridge will be raised and nobody will be allowed to pass through the outer gate into the barbican.

Even if enemy soldiers manage to take this gate, despite the boiling oil (or, more commonly, water), they must traverse the killing ground of the barbican to come face to face with another gate – and more boiling oil – before they can finally pass into the inner ward and attempt to breach the defenses of the keep itself.

### The Inner Ward

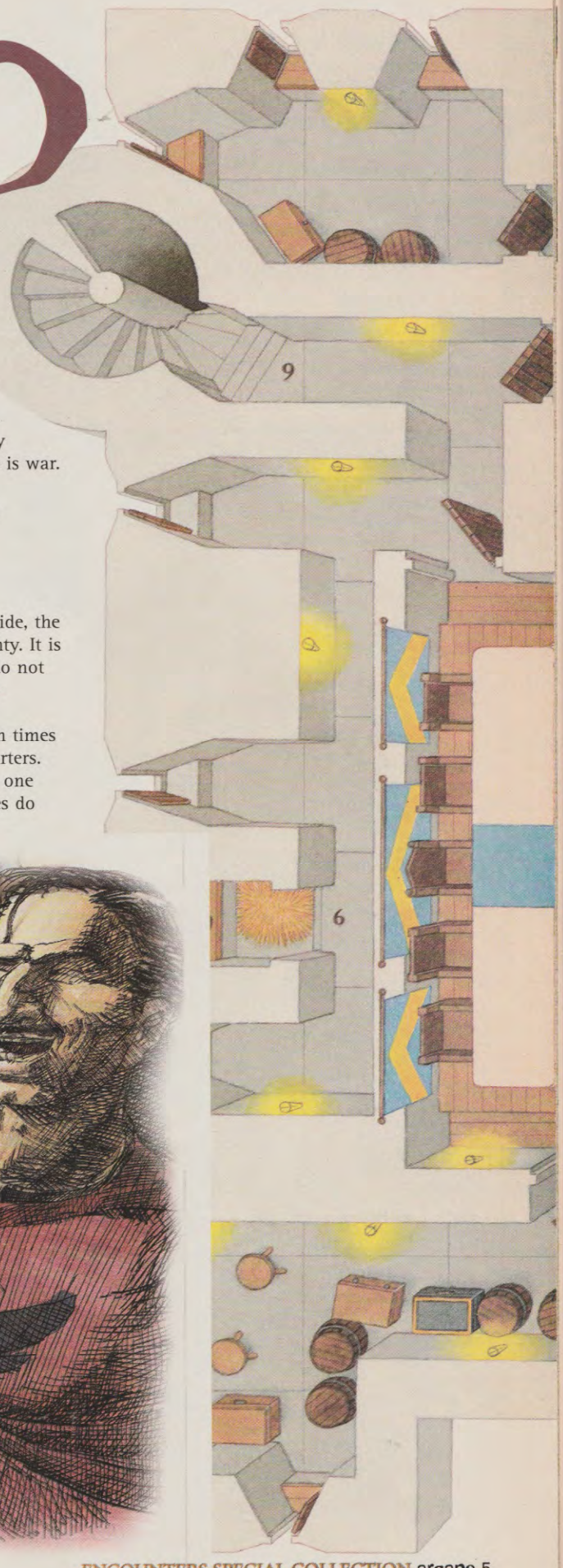
The inner ward is a scene of bustling activity. Knights practise jousting and archery, peasants care for the animals, and people constantly go to and fro.

The inner ward contains stables, a blacksmith, archery butts, lists for real and practice tournaments, granaries and stores. There is a barracks where most of the castle's soldiers sleep in times of peace – they will only crowd into the keep if there is war. The buildings in the inner ward are built of wood, not stone, and are not intended to be defensible.

### The Keep

While it looks splendid from the outside, the keep's interior is cramped and draughty. It is also dark, since arrow-slit windows do not provide much light. The windows are unglazed and open to the elements.

The keep is designed for safety in times of war, not as comfortable living quarters. There is scant furniture. The lord has one large chair, while everyone else makes do



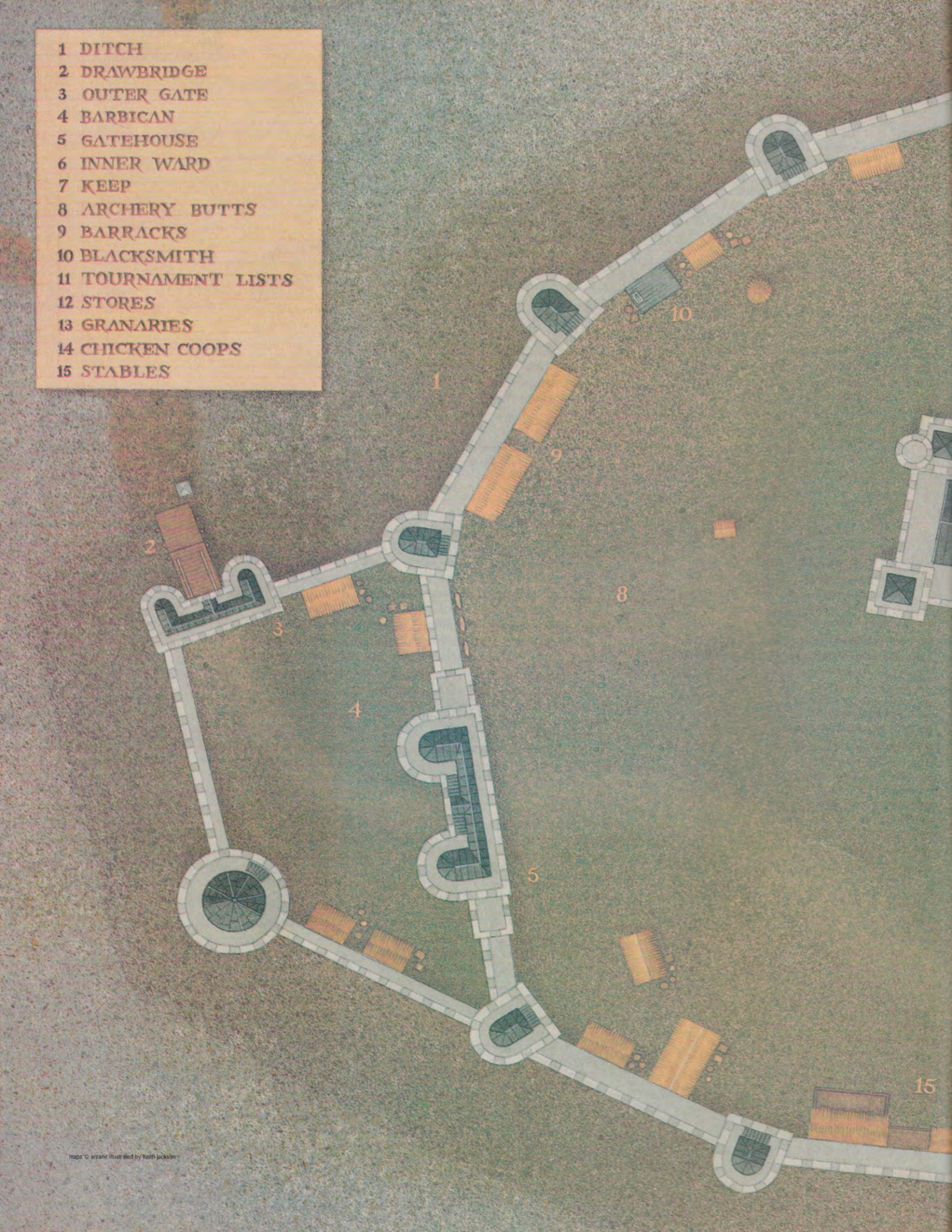



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illustration © arcane by Simon Gurr

### Lord Henry the Dragon

Lord Henry is the lord of Dragon Keep and the outlying villages and land. He has the hereditary rank of baron and, having spent some time at court, he is a knight in one of the Royal Orders of Knighthood. He is 35 years old.

He is a very good fighter, especially on horseback. Although he has fought at his king's side against foreign enemies, he has never had to defend his own castle. He is very strong and knows how to use all honourable weapons. He is loyal but not very strong-willed. He has rugged good looks.

Lord Henry returned home to Dragon Keep somewhat reluctantly three years ago when he received news of his father's death. He knows that he is needed at home, and that that is where his duty lies, but he would far rather be winning fame and fortune at the king's side.

He is proud of his son, little Henry, aged seven, and has already taught him to ride and to swing a wooden sword. If anyone asked him, he would answer that he loves his wife, but no-one ever does, and it never occurs to him to tell anyone, least of all Lady Eleanor herself.

**Quote: "Must say, I miss having a joust now and then."**

with benches. Tables consist of boards that are laid on trestles and covered with splendid cloths. Everything is stored in chests when not in use.

The ground floor of the keep contains only kitchens, store rooms, servants' quarters and a dungeon. There are no entrances on the ground floor.

The only way to get into the keep is to go up the stairs, across the drawbridge and through the guard room. The guard room is always manned.

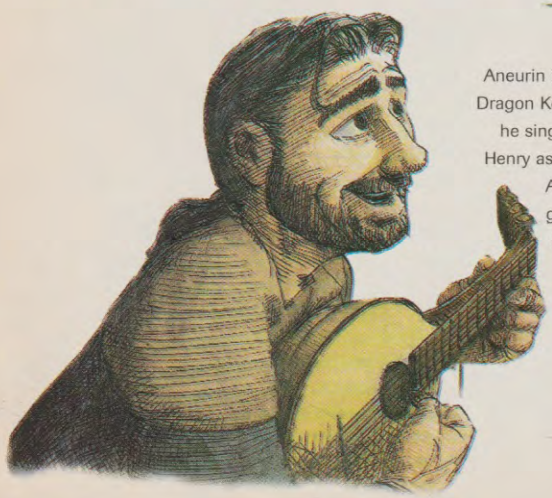
The well, which is the castle's internal water supply, is approached through the guard chamber, making it difficult for anyone to attempt to poison it. There is always a guard posted in the cubby overlooking the stair opposite the chapel.

## The Hall

The Hall is where most of the daily life of the castle goes on. The stone walls of the hall are hung with splendid tapestries and with the trophy heads of game. There are sconces for torches, which are needed even in the daytime. Despite their efforts, the hall remains very badly lit.

There is a raised dais at the end of the hall where the lord and lady and their most honoured guests sit to eat. Everyone else sits along the trestles that run lengthwise up the hall. Food is brought up the stairs from the kitchens. The troubadour sits on a stool and plays the harp or the lute to entertain the company.

When it is not time for a meal, the tables are cleared away and the hall is full of people. The nobles who live in the castle pass most of their time here. There is a huge fireplace, and the fire is always lit. The lord's hunting dogs sleep in front of it, and there are usually people warming themselves before it during the winter months. The inglenooks at the sides are the most comfortable places in the castle.



### Aneurin

Aneurin is a troubadour, a poet and singer who has been at Dragon Keep for six years. He's a favourite of Lady Eleanor as he sings beautiful love songs for her. Occasionally, Lord Henry asks for a more rousing tune, but rarely gets his way.

Aneurin plays a lute and a mandolin. He has a very good low singing voice, and large, dark, soulful eyes. He claims to be able to perform magic, and will mix herbal healing potions. In magical worlds he might be a druid. He does not like Lord Henry or Sir Robert, and is quite in love with Lady Eleanor.

**Quote: "Shall I sing another soothing song?"**

Once a month the lord holds court and the hall is open to any petitioners who come seeking justice.

## The Lord's Chamber

The lord's chamber is the only private room in the castle that is heated. As well as being a bedroom, it is the lord's private work quarters. It is here that he consults with his knights, his steward (who lives outside the castle) and with the cleric who deals with all his paperwork.

## The Other Chambers

The other chambers on this floor are living quarters for the castle's knights and for guests. They are cramped and may be shared by as many as six people at a time. This is considered luxurious compared with the conditions in which the servants live, on the windowless ground floor.

## The Chapel

The chapel is in the castle's north-east tower and is easily reached from outside. Every day the lord's chaplain holds services here for both the inhabitants of the castle and the people who live nearby, who can reach the chapel without having to pass through the keep's innermost defenses.

The chapel is very richly decorated, with gold ornaments and elaborate carvings. Nobody would dare incur divine wrath by attacking or looting it, even if the remainder of the castle were taken by force.

# The Feudal Society

The feudal system is based on the idea that the king owns all land before God and makes grants of this land to his nobles, whose titles may or may not be hereditary. The nobles then make grants of their land to lesser nobles, and the process continues on down to the peasantry. The peasants are the most essential part of the system because they produce the food that everyone eats, but they are considered to be the most worthless.

Titles vary from place to place, but are usually arranged in a strict hierarchy or order of precedence. A typical order might be: king and queen, princes and princesses, dukes, earls and counts, marquis and viscounts, barons, and then landed knights and unlanded knights. Knights are usually members of an Order of Chivalry. They do not inherit their titles but are granted them as a personal honour. It is possible for someone to be a knight and in addition bear an hereditary title.

Most lords keep some fighting men around. Some of these may be commoners who can fight, or they may be knights or esquires – younger sons of noble families who have yet to inherit their titles and who have not been knighted.

In a system like this, family is very important indeed. You may always turn to your family for aid. Equally, they may turn to you for help at any time.

## Tournaments and Jousts

Tournaments are practice battles in which warriors can display their skills. Historically, the most famous tournament was that of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, held in France.

In any High Mediaeval kingdom, there would be regular tournaments which would include sword fighting, jousting with lances from horseback, and sometimes mock melees. These tournaments serve more than one purpose. They are entertainment, both for those who take part and those who watch, and they are also a chance for young fighters to show their prowess and win renown.

Usually, the occasion of a tournament is announced well in advance and invitations are sent out farv and wide. Sometimes, a tournament will be by invitation only; others might be open to all comers. All entrants enter their name into the lists of combatants thus the term 'the lists' came to mean the ground on which a tournament is held.) There's usually a prize, which might be valuable but may well be merely a token of valour.

## Controlling the Land

In the Middle Ages a castle was considered able to control the surrounding land to within a radius of ten miles. This may seem small, but a warhorse carrying a knight in full mail and armour could not be expected to travel more than 20 miles in a day, and be fit to fight at the end of it. Along particularly dangerous borders, and in recently conquered country where the peasants were rebellious, you would expect to find castles spaced twenty miles or so apart.

Castles were always sited with a view to defensibility. They were often built in raised positions on hills, which has the advantages of both making attack more difficult and giving a commanding view of the land. Castles were often positioned to control a road and a river.

## Heraldry

In the pre-literate mediaeval age, people's memories were much better. Every knight and lord bore his own arms – a device on his shield that distinguished him from every other knight. In times of war, the only way you could recognise friend from foe was by his device.

These devices are described in a specialised vocabulary. The study of this vocabulary – heraldry – is complex. At its simplest, a shield will bear a device in one colour placed on a background of another colour. The device, often the depiction of an animal, is described in specialised terms according to its posture. Here's a simplified look at the nomenclature:

### Colours:

| | |
|---|---|
| Argent | Silver |
| Or | Gold |
| Azure | Blue |
| Gules | Red |
| Vert | Green |
| Sable | Black |
| Purpure | Purple |

### Positions:

Standing up: Rampant
Sitting down: Sejant
Standing with one foot raised: Passant
Standing with head turned: Rampant Regardant
Lying down: Couchant
Standing looking ahead: Rampant Gardant

Armorial bearings on a shield may be split – for instance, in the case of the marriage of two great houses. Splitting a device once (two straight halves) is called Impalement, and split one into quarters is called quartering.

Amongst typical heraldic beasts are the dragon, lion, griffin, unicorn and wyvern.

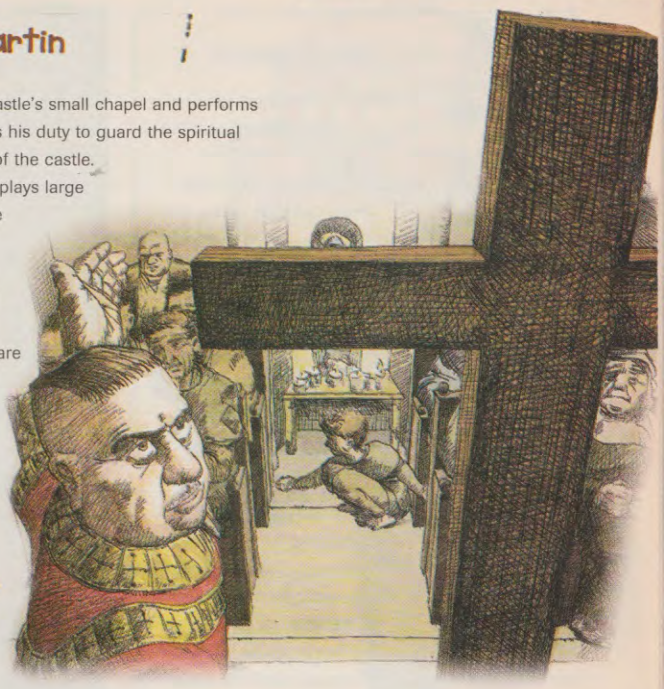
### Brother Martin

Brother Martin is a priest. He looks after the castle's small chapel and performs services there regularly. He also regards it as his duty to guard the spiritual health of the inhabitants of the castle.

He always wears a long brown cassock and displays large and prominent religious symbols. He shaves the top of his head. He is 46 years old.

Brother Martin is exceptionally curious and always does his best to find out what is going on. He is much more loyal to the church organisation than to the castle. He and Sulien are the only people in the keep who can read. He keeps all the accounts for the castle and, in the role of clerk, deals with all of Lord Henry's correspondence.

**Quote: "Are you at peace with God, my daughter?"**



### Sir Sulien

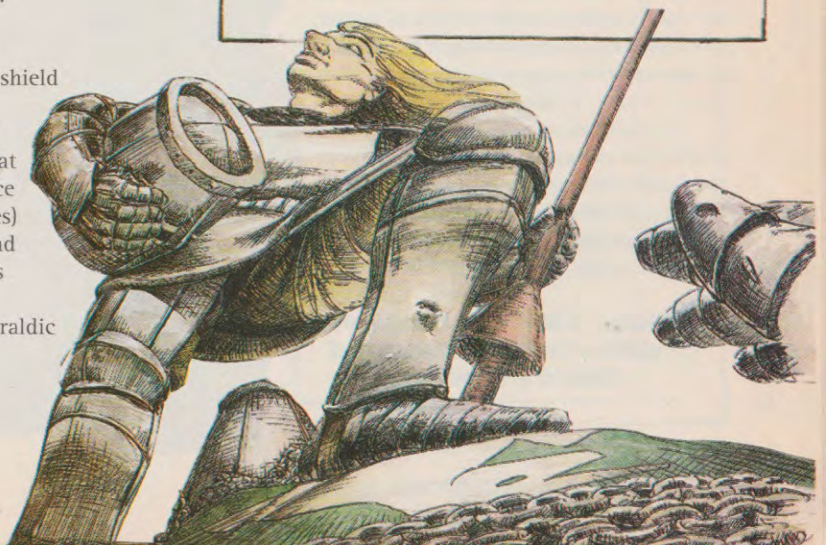
Very few women are ever knighted, even if they are an earl's daughter. Learning to fight takes a long time, and most women prefer not to bother. Sulien, however, learned to fight as a child, sharing lessons with her twin brother, Geoffrey. Disguised as a boy, she went with him to a tournament held at the royal court. She did so well there that the king knighted her even after she had revealed her true name and sex. Later, she fought beside her brother and the king. Even after Geoffrey was killed in an heroic last stand, she remained at the king's side, winning renown.

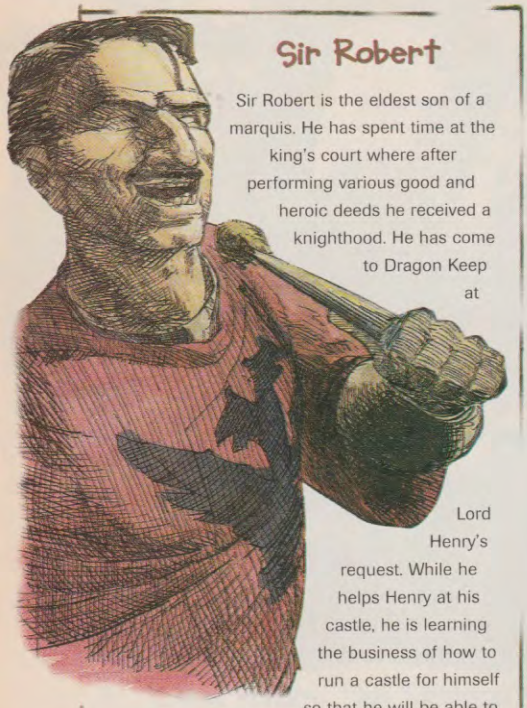
She and Geoffrey always adored their spoilt little sister, Arabella. When Sulien heard about Arabella's troubles she immediately deserted and returned to help her. She means to install Arabella safely with Lord Henry, far from her father's reach, and then return to the king and ask his pardon.

Sulien almost always wears chain mail. She has long fair hair, which is usually concealed under a helmet. She looks much like Arabella except for her resolute expression and firm jaw. She can use all honourable weapons and excels with a long sword.

Sulien has resisted all offers of marriage, preferring a life of honour and excitement. She is 24.

**Quote: "I looked him straight in the eye and then ran him through."**





## Sir Robert

Sir Robert is the eldest son of a marquis. He has spent time at the king's court where after performing various good and heroic deeds he received a knighthood. He has come to Dragon Keep at Lord Henry's request. While he helps Henry at his castle, he is learning the business of how to run a castle for himself so that he will be able to take over successfully from his father when the right time comes.

Sir Robert is dashing and gallant. He is very good with weapons, preferring a lance to a sword. He is also a bit of a ladies man and is known for complimenting all beautiful ladies, and flirts particularly with Lady Eleanor.

He is in charge of the other knights and guards of the castle and organises their duty times.

**Quote: "I feel quite faint before your beauty."**

## Emrys

Emrys is the cook, and the head of the castle's sprawling staff of 40 servants. He is 55 and has served at Dragon Castle for most of his life, as he began work as a scullion at the tender age of ten.

A man with a very loud voice, Emrys dominates all the servants, who are terrified of him. He also intimidates Lady Eleanor, and if they disagree he makes sure that he gets his own way by refusing to listen to her.

He regards Lord Henry and Lady Eleanor as very much inferior to the old lord – Henry's father, David. The only person he really likes is little Belinda. In the village he talks very rudely about the nobles.

Despite all this he regards himself as a loyal servant and would not betray the castle to enemies, no matter what he was promised. If anyone approached him for this purpose they would soon find themselves residing in the dungeons.

**Quote: "Don't talk to me about nobles. Useless lot – waste of time if you ask me."**

# Adventure Seeds

## Haunted castle

In a game set in a later period – anything from the Renaissance up to the far future – Dragon Keep can be used as a ruin, although it may still be inhabited. In this case, it will be patched up: the roof will leak and the electricity will be inconveniently cut off at times. It will inevitably be haunted.

For a subtle haunting, rather than one of the rattling chains and white sheet variety, use the characters described as the ghosts. Emrys might haunt the kitchens, bellowing silently at unseen scullions. Lady Eleanor still paces petulantly back and forth the battlements, waiting for excitement.

Lord Henry might ride out again to look at his lands, or to meet his cousins from the ship. Best of all, if the castle has been betrayed from within, the traitor might be doomed to repeat his actions forever, until he can find rest.

It can be very effective to play a game like the one suggested in the Tournament seed, and then later to play a different game with different characters and a present-day setting in which the new party resolves the unfinished story that ended in untimely death.

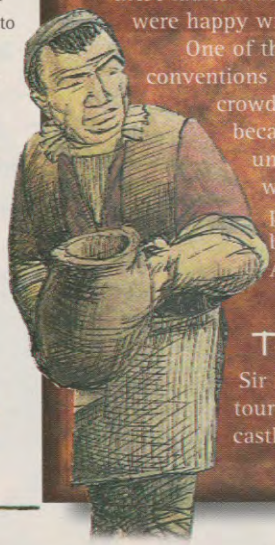
## Courtly love

Marriage in the mediaeval world was usually a matter of convenience, decided on by the couple's parents to forge an alliance rather than for reasons of love.

Romantic love in the modern sense came to the fore in the mediaeval period, with the songs of troubadours and the immense popularity of the stories of King Arthur and of Tristan and Isolde.

A knight would fall romantically in love with a lady – someone married or impossible to attain. He would write her love poems and wear her favour (a glove or a scarf pinned on his shoulder) at tournaments. The husbands of these ladies who were adored from a distance were happy with this.

One of the forces behind the conventions of courtly love was the crowded conditions of castles, because a knight could not marry until he had his own land. It was encouraged and made popular in the 12th century by Queen Eleanor of Acquitaine.



## Tournament

Sir Henry decides to hold a tournament while Sulien is at the castle. He sends out invitations to all and sundry – including the party that is accompanying Sulien.

While the tournament is going on, or during the banquet that follows, there is an attack on the castle by the father of Arabella and Sulien. This could be a direct attack or, more subtly, a betrayal. Eleanor, jealous of the attention Arabella is attracting, could open the gates to the attackers, believing their promises that they will protect her and her children. Or Brother Martin could betray them all. There are many possibilities for betrayal and the conflict that must inevitably follow.

## Sulien's Band

The party are Sulien's band, the warriors who always fight with her. When she deserts to help her sister, they naturally accompany her. This is a good way of getting a party inside the castle and embroiled in the evolving conflicts between the characters. It's also a good way of introducing the mediaeval conventions to the players.

Sulien's band need not all be from Lord Henry's culture – Sulien and Arabella's culture is itself subtly different. The party can encounter the culture of his world one piece at a time, and have things explained to them on a 'need-to-know' basis.

## Siege

The party are inside the castle when ships show up to besiege them. The internal situation worsens, and it is not possible for them to escape from the castle. A small party might have a chance to break through the lines and get a message to the king in time to save everyone. Betrayals are also possible here: wells could be poisoned, gates opened and guards bribed.

## Questing

In a period of chivalry and high romance, knights go out questing for magical or unusual things. Knights on a quest are entitled to hospitality wherever they go, and this can be a good way of getting people inside a castle. Suitable aims for a quest include: the Holy Grail, the Questing Beast, a milk-white hind, and one's true love.

## The Border Lord

Arabella thinks her husband is dead, but she didn't see his body. He may have escaped and be seeking her. He may gather up a few trusty PC companions and come to the castle in disguise, suspecting she's there. If he sees her flirting with a knight there could be blood.

# Full scenario

## Summoned to a Tourney

*"By a knight of ghosts and shadows*
*I summoned am to tourney"*
Tom O'Bedlam's song, traditional.

## Invitation

A Grand Tournament Will Be Held at Dragon Keep upon the 23rd Day of June to celebrate the Birthday of young Lord Henry. An open Invitation is hereby issued to all Knights and Esquires of the District, and to any travelling Knights wishing to prove themselves in the Lists. There will be Jousting, Sword-Fighting, and the day will end with a Mock Melee.

The winner of the Jousting and the winner of the Sword-Fighting will be crowned in Bay and lead the two sides of the Melee. There will be splendid prizes of gold as well as much honour to be won.

## Welcome

When the PCs arrive for the Tourney, they'll be invited to the Pavilion, a tent near the lists. Lord Henry will welcome them and introduce them to the Lady Eleanor and Arabella. Young Henry and his sister, little Belinda, are there, wearing miniature versions of adult clothes.

Refreshments will be offered, and the party will be introduced to other visiting knights. At least one PC should be, or appear to be, a noble. Others can mingle with the crowd outside, enjoying sideshows and looking forward to fighting in the melee, in which all able-bodied people are welcome.

There may be other contests organised – choose some which suit the PCs skills such as archery, spear throwing etc. Young Henry, assisted by the ladies, will judge the contest. Lady Arabella will offer her favour to the strongest and most handsome PC, if nobody asks her for it.

## The Lists

Sir Sulien, Sir Robert and Lord Henry will all fight in all rounds. Robert wears Lady Eleanor's favour, Lord Henry wears his daughter Belinda's. Sulien does not wear one. Unless beaten by the PCs, she will win the sword-fighting easily.

There is a masked stranger in the lists who does well at the jousting. If none of the PCs do well, he and Sulien will be the leaders of the different sides in the melee. The stranger is, in fact, the border-lord, Sir Ronald, Arabella's lost husband. If he's drawn against the PC wearing her favour, his blows will not be gentle.

## Agitators

Towards the end of the jousting and during the sword-fighting, strangers are making their way through the crowd trying to stir up trouble. They are agents of Sulien and Arabella's father, Lord Percy of Leopard Keep.

These agents do not know who they are working for. They have been instructed to cause trouble during the tournament. They will pick fights – with the PCs between rounds if they can – agitate among the peasants and try and foment a rebellion.

These are professional troublemakers; there are nine of them. Some of them will pass around strong beer. Their plan is to cause a major disturbance and distract the men, allowing them to kidnap Arabella and take her home. The PCs should have the chance to observe several instances of this, and possibly to be harassed by the agitators themselves. They should all be intending to fight in the melee, and take up wooden swords and shields for the purpose.

## Crowning

While the competitors take up wooden weapons, the winners of the jousting and sword-fighting are crowned by Lady Arabella and Lady Eleanor, with crowns made from bay-twigs and gold thread. The leaders wear these instead of helmets for the melee.

## The Melee

When the Melee has just begun, one of the agitators speaks to Emrys, who lets out a loud bellow and thumps the agitator hard, starting a riot among the crowd.

The mock melee becomes a real melee. The other agitators seize the opportunity and rush for the pavilion to attempt to seize the lady. They attempt to grab Arabella and as many other hostages as they can, then run for the gates where they have horses waiting and a ship at the beach.

The nobles of the castle, and the masked stranger, will attempt to stop them, but unless the PCs help, they will escape. There should be a fight in which the agitators are armed with daggers and the PCs only with wooden weapons.

If the ladies are saved, Lord Henry will reward the PCs handsomely, and the masked knight will take off his mask and reveal himself to Lady Arabella, freeing Sulien to return to the wars. She may well want to enlist the PCs to go with her.

## Sources

*Le Morte D'Arthur* (Mallory) is comprehensive; modern interpretations are easier to read.

## Lady Arabella

Arabella is the youngest daughter of an earl in a nearby country. Her mother is the sister of Lord Henry's mother, and so Arabella and Henry are cousins. Before Arabella's recent arrival at the castle, they had rarely met.

Five years ago, when she was 17, Arabella ran away from home to marry a neighbouring lord. Her father cast her out for this, but her brother and sister stood by her. While the king was away at war, her husband became involved in a rebellion against her father, who was his feudal lord. Her husband was killed and his castle destroyed. Arabella hid, and asked her sister Sulien to help her to safety.

Arabella is dark-haired and dark-eyed, and extremely beautiful. She likes to wear fashionable and feminine clothes, but does not have a great deal with her. She has never used a sword, but she keeps a sharp dagger under her clothes for use in emergencies.

**Quote: "I wish I could feel safe."**

## Lady Eleanor

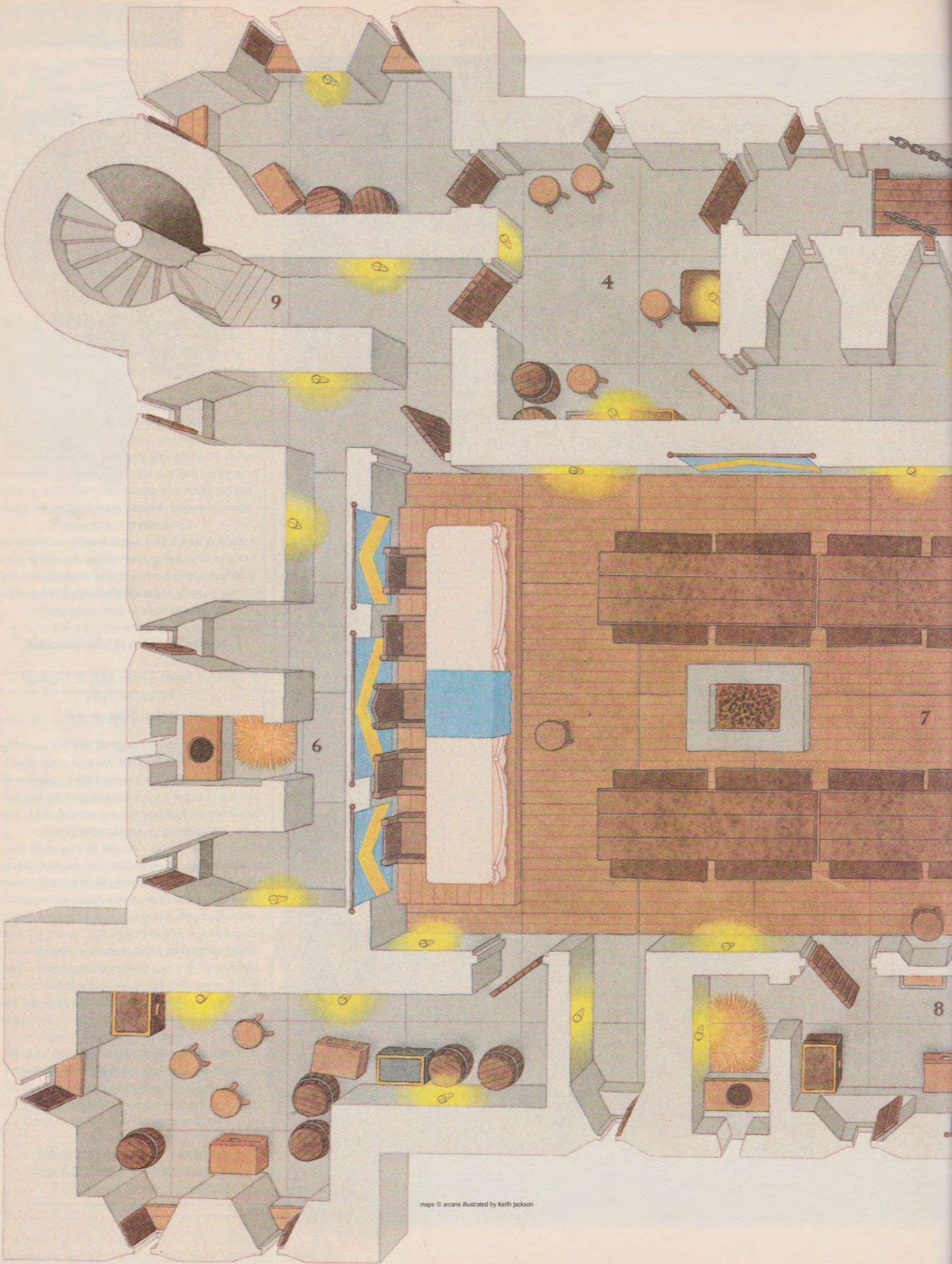
Lady Eleanor is a count's daughter, and she sometimes needs to remind Henry that she took a step down when she married a mere baron. She met and married Henry in the days when he was at court. He installed her at Dragon Keep immediately, and visited her only occasionally before his father's death.

She is 26 and has been married for nine years. With her long golden hair, large blue eyes and fine features, Lady Eleanor is strikingly pretty. Unfortunately, her fine features are often marred by a petulant expression.

Lord Henry allows her to buy clothes in the most fashionable and splendid styles. She has two children – Little Henry, seven, and Belinda, four – but does not spend much time with them, preferring to leave them to their nurse. She likes to embroider, and sits sewing by the window of her tower. She also likes to flirt with the knights and very much enjoys Aneurin's songs about her beauty.

She manages the affairs of the castle and holds the keys, yet she feels as if she is missing a lot of what makes life exciting, and loves to hear stories about adventure. She does not own and has never used any kind of weapon except an eating dagger.

**Quotes: "I wish I could see something of the world," and, "Stuck here, as I am..."**

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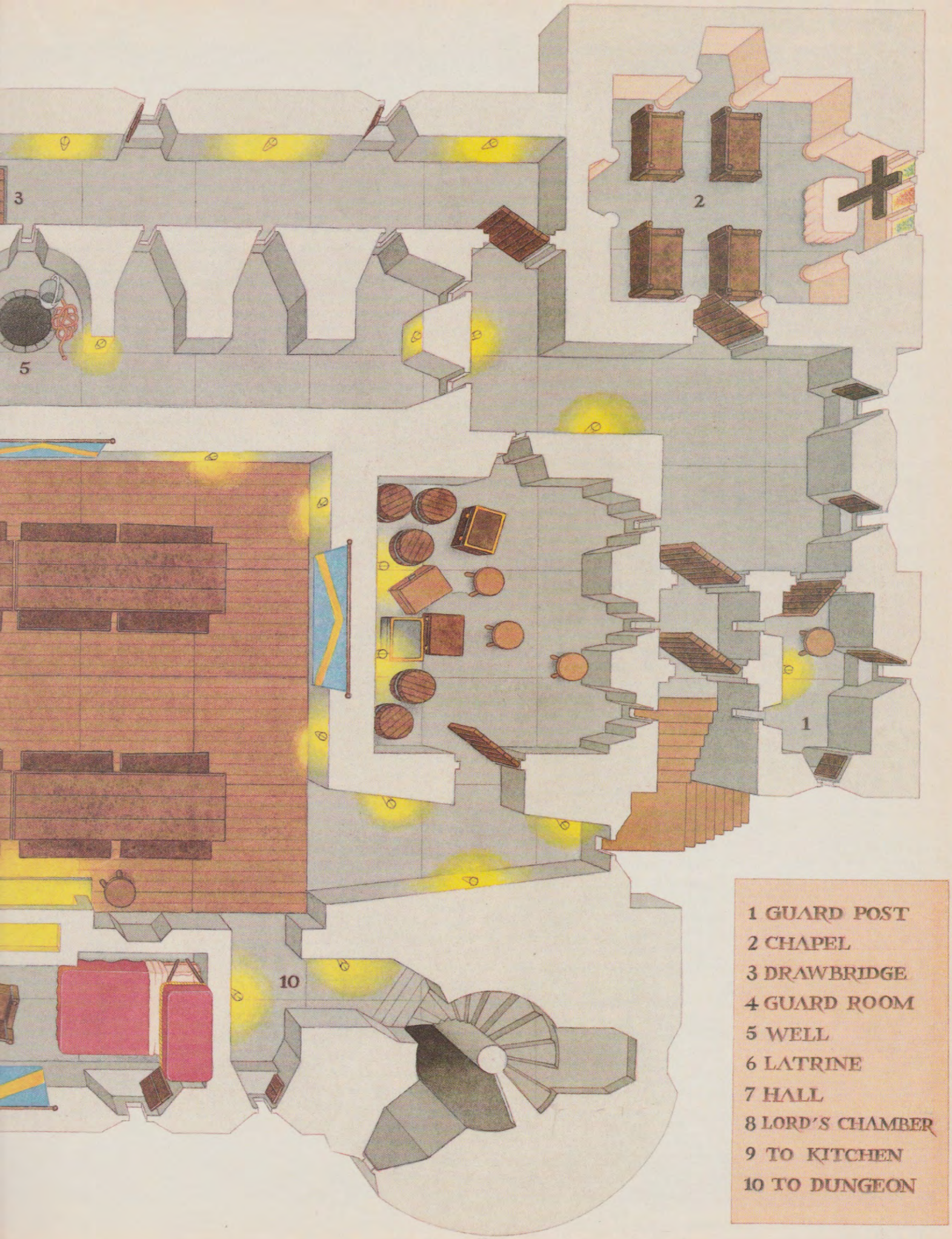


1 GUARD POST
2 CHAPEL
3 DRAWBRIDGE
4 GUARD ROOM
5 WELL
6 LATRINE
7 HALL
8 LORD'S CHAMBER
9 TO KITCHEN
10 TO DUNGEON

# Character Statistics

**Presented here are the statistics for *AD&D* and *Warhammer FRP* for the main characters in Dragon Keep.**

## Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

Dragon Castle should fit well into any medieval/high fantasy setting for AD&D.

### Lord Henry the Dragon

**FIGHTER** 10, LG **STR:** 17 **INT:** 12
**WIS:** 10 **DEX:** 12 **CON:**16 **CHA:** 13
**AC:** -1*(*in field plate, 10 usually*) **HP:** 73
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 11 **#ATT:** 3/2
**WEAPONS:** Dagger, Flail, Mace, Lance, Longsword, Greatsword, Spear
**PROFICIENCIES:** Animal Training, Heraldry, Swimming, Endurance, Hunting, Racking, Local History, Riding+1
**Henry has a knight's shield +2 as a gift from his king.*

### Lady Eleanor

**LEVEL 0**, LN **STR:** 10 **INT:** 14
**WIS:** 10 **DEX:** 13 **CON:** 13 **CHA:** 15
**AC:** 10 **HP:** 2
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 20 **#ATKS:** 1
**WEAPONS:** Dagger
**PROFICIENCIES:** Art (Needlework) +2, Dancing, Etiquette, Local History

### Lady Arabella

**BARD** 2, NG **STR:** 9 **INT:** 13
**WIS:** 9 **DEX:** 16 **CON:** 15 **CHA:** 17
**AC:** 8 **HP:** 12
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 20 **#ATT:** 1
**WEAPONS:** Dagger
**PROFICIENCIES:** Etiquette, Singing, Dancing, Disguise, Play Harp, Local History +1
**CLIMB:** 50%
**DETECT NOISE:** 65%
**SLEIGHT OF HAND:** 20%
**SPELLS:** L1: Friends

### Sir Sulien

**FIGHTER** 7, LG **STR:** 13 **INT:** 15
**WIS:** 13 **DEX:** 16 **CON:** 13 **CHA:** 16
**AC:** -1*(plate w/shld, 3 chain mail)* **HP:** 29
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 14 *(12 w/longsword)*
**#ATT:** 3/2 *(2 w/longsword)*
**WEAPONS:** Longsword (specialisation, *magical +1*), Lance, Dagger, Mace
**PROFICIENCIES:** Heraldry +1, Riding, Blind-Fighting, Hunting, Running, Local History, Read/Write

### Sir Robert

**FIGHTER** 6, LG **STR:** 15 **INT:** 13
**WIS:** 14 **DEX:** 14 **CON:** 16 **CHA:** 15
**AC:** 1 *(field plate, 10 normally)* **HP:** 39
**MV:12 THAC0:**15 **#ATT:** 1
**WEAPONS:** Lance (specialisation), Longsword, Spear, Dagger
**PROFICIENCIES:** Heraldry +1, Armourer, Animal Training, Riding +1, Etiquette

### Aneurin

**BARD** 7, N **STR:** 12 **INT:** 15
**WIS:** 13 **DEX:** 14 **CON:** 9 **CHA:** 17
**AC:** 8 *(leather, 10 normally)* **HP:** 21
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 17 **#ATT:** 1
**WEAPONS:** Dagger, Shortsword, Throwing Dagger
**PROFICIENCIES:** Play Lute, Play Harp, Singing +1, Etiquette, Ventriloquism, Local History +1, Ancient History
**CLIMB:** 55%
**DETECT NOISE:** 50%
**SLEIGHT OF HAND:** 60%
**READ LANGUAGES:** 45%
**SPELLS:** L1: Audible Glamer, Cantrip, Message
L2: Blur, Ray of Enfeeblement
L3: Suggestion

### Brother Martin

**CLERIC** 7, LG **STR:** 12 **INT:** 14
**WIS:** 15 **DEX:** 10 **CON:** 11 **CHA:** 9
**AC:** 10 *(5 in chain mail)* **HP:** 33
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 16 **#ATT:** 1
**WEAPONS:** Quarterstaff
**PROFICIENCIES:** Etiquette, Singing, Weather Sense, Local History, Ancient History, Healing, Herbalism, Reading/Writing, Religeon +1
**SPELLS:** L1: Bless, Cure Light Wounds, Detect Evil
L2: Augury, Resist Fire, Withdraw
L3: Cure Disease, Remove Curse
L4: Divination

### Emrys

**FIGHTER** 3, LN **STR:** 13 **INT:** 9
**WIS:** 10 **DEX:** 12 **CON:** 17 **CHA:** 8
**AC:** 10 **HP:** 25
**MV:** 12 **THAC0:** 18 **#ATT:** 1
**WEAPONS:** Dagger, Shortsword, Club, Spear, Longbow
**PROFICIENCIES:** Brewing, Cooking +1, Local History, Set Snares, Weather Sense

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## Warhammer Fantasy Role-Play

In the Warhammer World, Dragon Castle would probably best fit in Brettonia, where the feudal system is still fairly entrenched, and courtly love is fashionable; alternately, it could be a last refuge of the old values in the Empire, where they still do things "proper".

If transferred to the Empire, the NPCs will want to be given more Germanic-sounding names, and the castle may well be called Drachenburg.

For more on nobles in WFRP, see "Nobility and Royalty" in the WFRP supplement *Apocrypha Now.*

*In the statistics that follow, note that Skills marked with an asterisk are from Apocrypha Now.*

### Lord Henry the Dragon (Noble – Rank 2)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 61 | 45 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 50 | 2 | 39 | 89 | 39 | 59 | 49 | 69 |

**SKILLS**
Blather; Charm; Consume Alcohol; Disarm; Dodge Blow; Etiquette; Gamble; Game Hunting; Heraldry; Luck; Musicianship; Public Speaking; Ride; Sing; Specialist Weapon – Fencing Sword; Specialist Weapon – Lance; Parrying Weapons; Stewardship*; Story Telling; Wit

### Lady Eleanor (Noble – Rank 1)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 31 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 30 | 1 | 31 | 39 | 34 | 34 | 32 | 36 |

**SKILLS**
Blather; Charm ; Etiquette; Heraldry; Luck; Musicianship; Public Speaking; Ride; Wit

### Lady Arabella (Noble – Rank 1)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 34 | 22 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 31 | 1 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 22 | 25 | 39 |

**SKILLS**
Blather, Charm, Etiquette, Luck, Musicianship, Ride

### Sir Sulien (Free Lance)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 51 | 25 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 50 | 3 | 29 | 59 | 39 | 69 | 31 | 49 |

**SKILLS**
Charm; Disarm; Dodge Blow; Luck; Read/Write; Ride; Secret Language – Battle Tongue; Specialist Weapon – Lance; Specialist Weapon – Fencing Sword; Specialist Weapon – Flail; Strike Mighty Blow; Strike to Stun; Strike to Injure

### Sir Robert (Noble – Rank 1)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 35 | 25 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 30 | 1 | 31 | 39 | 34 | 34 | 32 | 36 |

**SKILLS**
Blather; Charm; Consume Alcohol; Etiquette; Gamble; Heraldry; Luck; Public Speaking; Ride; Specialist Weapon – Lance; Wit

### Aneurin (Elven Minstrel, ex-Wizard's Apprentice)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 51 | 44 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 70 | 1 | 63 | 53 | 76 | 66 | 43 | 53 |

**SKILLS**
Arcane Language – Magick; Cast Spells – Petty Magic; Charm; Etiquette; Excellent Vision; Musicianship; Night Vision – 30 yards; Public Speaking; Read/Write; Secret Language – Classical; Scroll Lore; Sing

**SPELLS**
Petty Magic: Gift of Tongues, Glowing Light, Sleep, Sounds, Zone of Silence, Zone of Warmth

### Brother Martin (Cleric of Ulric)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 33 | 35 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 50 | 1 | 39 | 29 | 39 | 49 | 49 | 49 |

**SKILLS**
Arcane Language – Magick; Cast Spells – Clerical 1 & 2; Charm Animal (wolves only); Disarm; Dodge Blow; Identify Undead; Magical Sense; Meditate; Public Speaking; Read/Write; Scroll Lore; Secret Language – Classical; Theology

**SPELLS**
Petty Magic: Magic Alarm, Magic Flame, Remove Curse Battle Magic Level 1: Cure Light Injury, Fireball, Strength of Combat, Wind Blast Battle Magic Level 2: Aura of Protection, Lightning Bolt, Mystic Mist, Zone of Sanctuary

### Emrys (Servant – Cook)

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dx | Ld | Int | Cl | Wp | Fel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 23 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 40 | 1 | 29 | 39 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 29 |

**SKILLS**
Blather; Cook; Dodge Blow; Etiquette

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# Sintra Space Station

the roleplaying magazine
arcane

- This Encounter is suitable for any gaming system
- Statistics have been supplied for

Marc Miller's
TRAVELLER®
STAR WARS

*Welcome to Sintra Space Station. This encounter was first presented in issue 8 of* arcane. *In addition to all the original characters, statistics have been included for both Traveller and Star Wars.*

Station gravity took hold and suddenly 'down' felt different. Morgan O'Brien reoriented himself without difficulty.

"A perfect docking, Columbine. Welcome to Sintra station."

"Thank you, dockmaster."

"Customs and immigration officials will be waiting at your lock. I hope you enjoy your time on Sintra."

The dockmaster's voice over the com sounded friendly, but Morgan was nervous. Of course it was a perfect dock. He'd been docking at stations for years. He was a good pilot, with an unimpeachable record. He wished his records for other things were as good.

He checked the papers again as he walked to the lock. Sintra was a new station for him, and a chance to start fresh. Here he hoped to hire a crew and start a legitimate trading operation, in whatever space the big corporations left open to independents. It wasn't always easy – he knew that.

He stepped out of the lock, trying to look more confident than he felt. He immediately smelt the familiar scents of a big space station – machine oil and metal. He heard the clanking and clattering of canisters being unloaded from the next ship along the dock, the whirr of a gantry and away beyond that, the unmistakable sound of people laughing and talking. There must be a newly-arrived transport full of people waiting to descend into the main wheel.

Then, the airlock cycled and Morgan stepped outside, grinning confidently and offering his papers to the waiting officials. The dock looked like every other station dock he'd ever seen, but he still looked about eagerly. It was bustling with more people and aliens than he'd seen for a long time. But it didn't bother him. He was the owner/operator of his own spaceship, he was free on a new space station and he was 15 years old. Who knew what adventures might lie ahead?

*The dockmaster awaits you so lock in to your bay, check in your papers and prepare for adventure on...*

# Sinta

The Sintra space station is suitable for any space campaign. A section of the docks and the station offices are shown. A party with a spaceship could come here for any reason and find adventures. Sintra is also a good place to start a campaign – a group could get together here and begin an adventure. It could then be used as a home base as the group keeps returning to Sintra between adventures. Sintra's internal politics and economics can then assume importance.

## The Docks

Everyone reaches Sintra by spaceship – either a shuttle up from the surface of the planet or an interstellar ship. In either case, the ship docks with the main docking station and then gains access to the main wheel of the station via the central elevator system (leading to the arrivals lounge). The docks are steel and metal. They are always busy and bustling with humans and aliens on foot and in small transports, which keep within the lines painted on the floor. Gangs of stationer youths hang out. All airlocks are guarded. The docks are connected to the rest of the station via an elevator system which leads into the reception and customs area.

# The Main Station area

## The Shops

There are many shops on the station, selling all manner of wares, from the mundane to strange, alien artifacts.

## The Seventh Star

The Seventh Star is an average bar. It's not terribly rough, but sometimes there are fights between the crews of different ships. It does not serve food, only alcohol in various strengths, and soft drinks. If there's a fight, a sheet-metal canopy crashes down over the bar, protecting the bartender, but threatening the customers' fingers. Most things are permitted, but gambling is forbidden, and anyone who begins gambling is asked to leave immediately. The bar is usually busy with people from various docked ships.

## Facility

Next to The Seventh Star is a public facility – a free bathroom which is open to anyone. It's periodically checked to make sure that indigents aren't sleeping there. These facilities can be found frequently along the many corridors and thoroughfares of Sintra.

## Tsong Li's General Store

On the corner near the reception lounge is a shop, Tsong Li's General Store. It buys and sells anything and everything. Purchases are made either by coming to the store in person or electronically. In either case, the customer browses the stock on the screen, and then Mr. Li fetches the goods from the storage area. There are many staples of life which Tsong Li's does not stock, but there are also many esoteric items which can be purchased there. Mr. Li will be interested in buying unique items, but not any junk, though he will redirect people wishing to see such things. If desired, this shop can connect to Mr. Smith's Mysterious Emporium, see arcane 3 (turn to page 53 if you missed it).

## The Offices

Most people who come to Sintra have reason to visit the offices at some time – to arrange departure times with the dockmaster, or to visit customs to find out the status of their goods. They may want work from the registry. They may even be summoned to appear in the boardroom to explain their actions to the council of the station.

### Oliver Yon

Oliver is the chief customs officer. He is tall and inscrutable looking, with a thin moustache. He is 60 years old. He emigrated to Sintra as a child from another station and has never been down on a planet. He is suspicious of independents and suspects them of smuggling and piracy.

He is incorruptible and tries to encourage a culture of refusing bribes among all customs officials. This works fairly well, but there are some failures. He is always impeccably polite, even when he is about to order the arrest of a smuggler.

**Quote: "These papers seem to be in order. I'll just check a random can to make sure the inside matches the outside. If you don't mind."**

# a Station

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## Reception Area

Anyone entering the station must pass through reception, announcing themselves at the desk. This area is always guarded. New arrivals must make themselves known to the staff working on the desks before being shown through customs (they may be searched, especially if they look particularly shifty, and all weapons will be taken away from them).

## The Registry

The registry is an office where new arrivals seeking work, and those offering work can find each other. There is a large bank of computers offering access to the exchange. Unfortunately, such access is not private from the registry, and sometimes people standing next to each other in physical location will outbid each other for a contract. Near to the registry is a sim room. Here, people seeking work can have their aptitudes tested, can get or improve their licenses for piloting and other skills, and otherwise prove their ability to do the job they want.

Any legitimate occupant of the station may register here without a fee, although there is a small certification fee for those wishing to gain or improve licenses. They may use the simulators to learn new skills, as long as they are not being used for other purposes.

## Dockmaster's Office

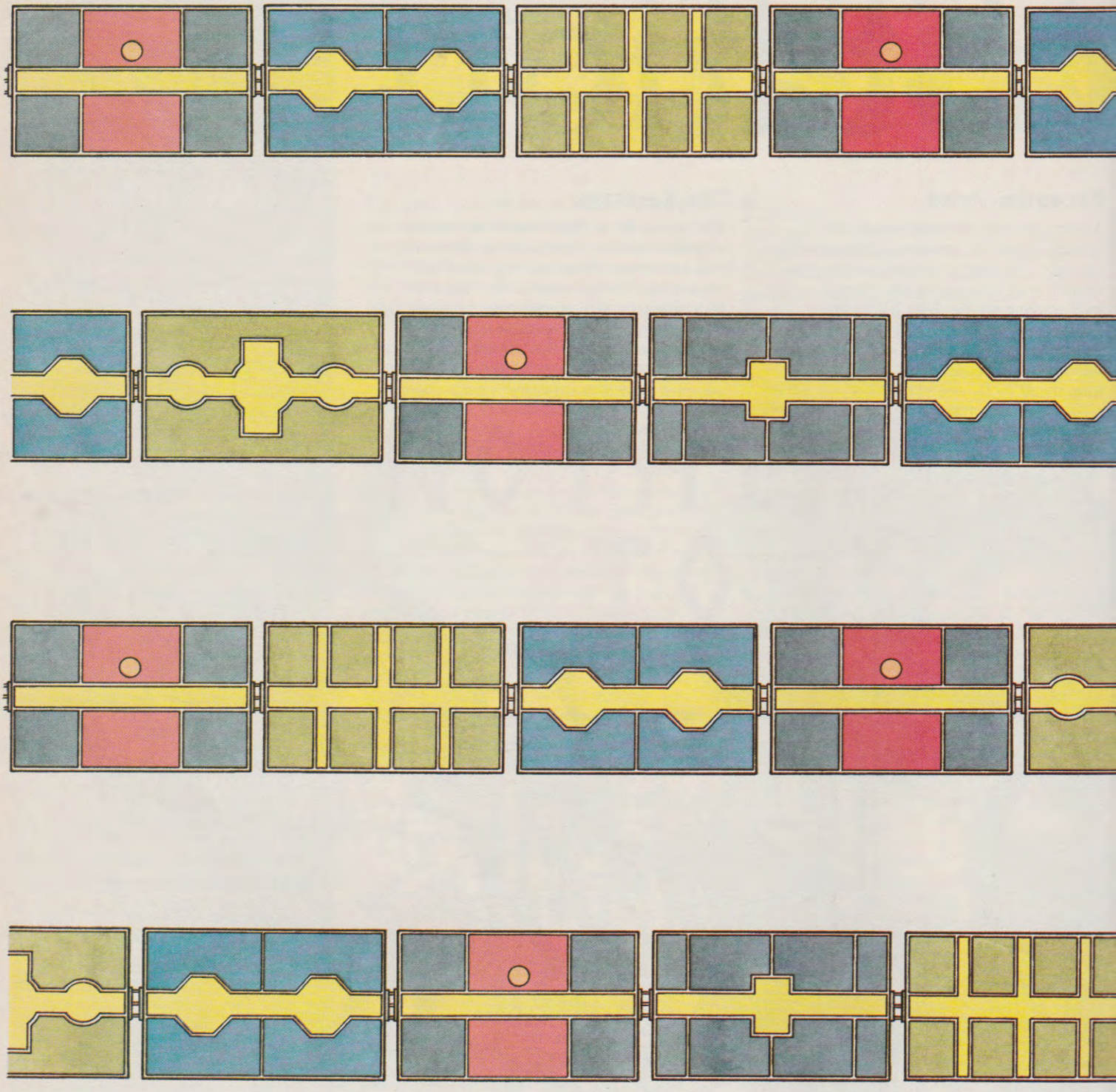
In the outer office people sit speaking directly by radio to incoming ships, assigning them lanes and docking sites at the busy station. Full radar scans of the system are available on the terminals here. The dockmaster, or one of her assistants, will always be present in the dockmaster's inner office, although much of the work is done on the ever-present computers. This is where all personal meetings are held and any bribes are paid.

## Customs Office

The customs office sends a representative to every one of the departing ships, making sure that the tolls are paid on all trade done on Sintra and that no illegal items are imported on to the station. Illegal items are certain drugs, weapons and explosives. Sintran wine does not count as a drug and is completely legal on Sintra, but those attempting to export wine may find that other stations have very different ideas about its status.

The customs office is extremely hard on smugglers – the penalty is confiscation of the ship and ten years hard labour on the vineyards of the planet.

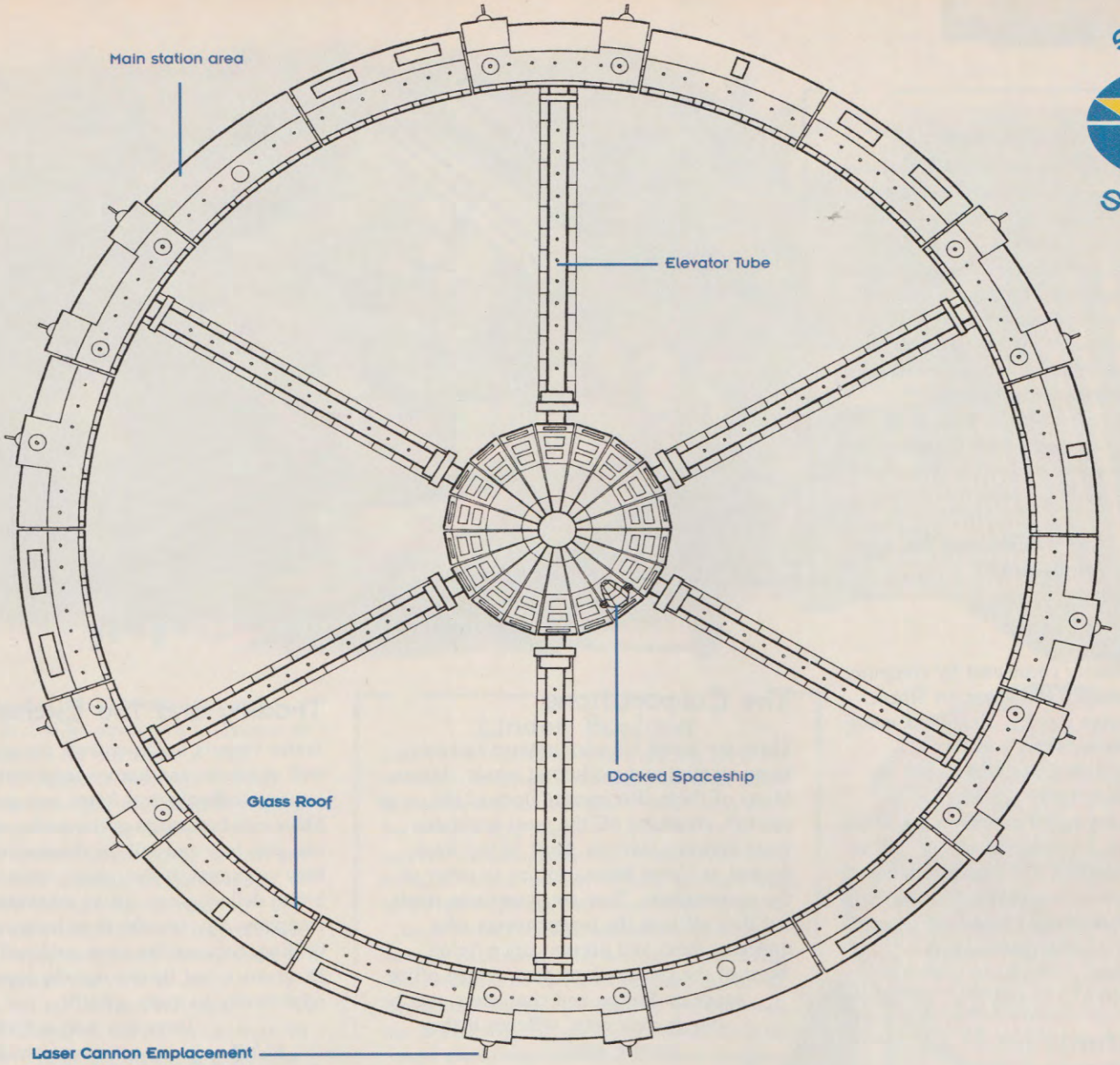
# SCHEMATIC OF MAIN STATION AREA

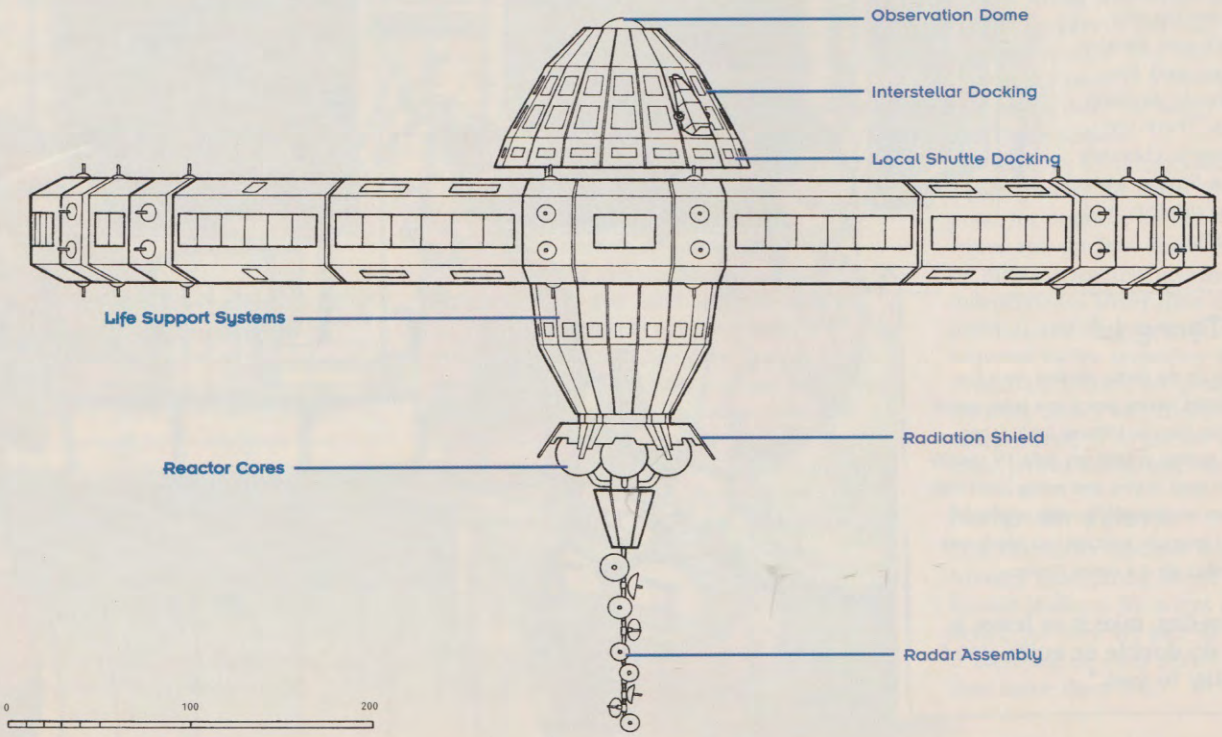


SINTRA STATION

- ADMINISTRATIVE
- COMMERCIAL
- ELEVATOR TUBE
- MAIN THOROUGHFARE
- MILITARY
- RESIDENTIAL

SINTRA STATION




maps © arcane illustrated by Keith Jackson

## Rachel Halsinger

Rachel is a young navigator who recently left the ship Cerise and is now looking for work. She is qualified in navigation and has basic piloting skills. She is 24 and has brown skin, hair and eyes. She is very ambitious and determined to be a success, and puts all her intelligence into getting better at navigation.

She grew up on various ships and left Cerise because of a quarrel with her family. She spends most of her time in the registry attempting to find work, and doing sims to improve her navigation skills.

She has been beached on Sintra for three months and is reaching the end of her resources. She has rejected posts on several ships she considered not good enough, but is growing desperate.

**Quote: "Are you looking for a navigator?"**

## Security

This office is directly connected by computer to the rest of security elsewhere on Sintra, and help can arrive rapidly. Sintra has many marines and guards, as well as fast interception ships constantly on guard to protect the station. There is always a minimum of three armed guards in the office at any time. This is not where people will be taken for interrogation and imprisonment, unless they are very important. (For that use the Prison from arcane 7.) However, private interviews into security matters may be conducted here.

## The Corporations

There are many big corporations in space, some owning and exploiting whole planets. Many of them also operate lines of big cargo carriers, creaming off the most profitable trade between stations. Most of the ships docked at Sintra belong to one or other of the corporations. They are sometimes rivals, but they all hate the independents who undercut them and prevent price fixing.

Most of the corporations have rented office space on Sintra, and characters may be able to visit corp' officials if they require work.

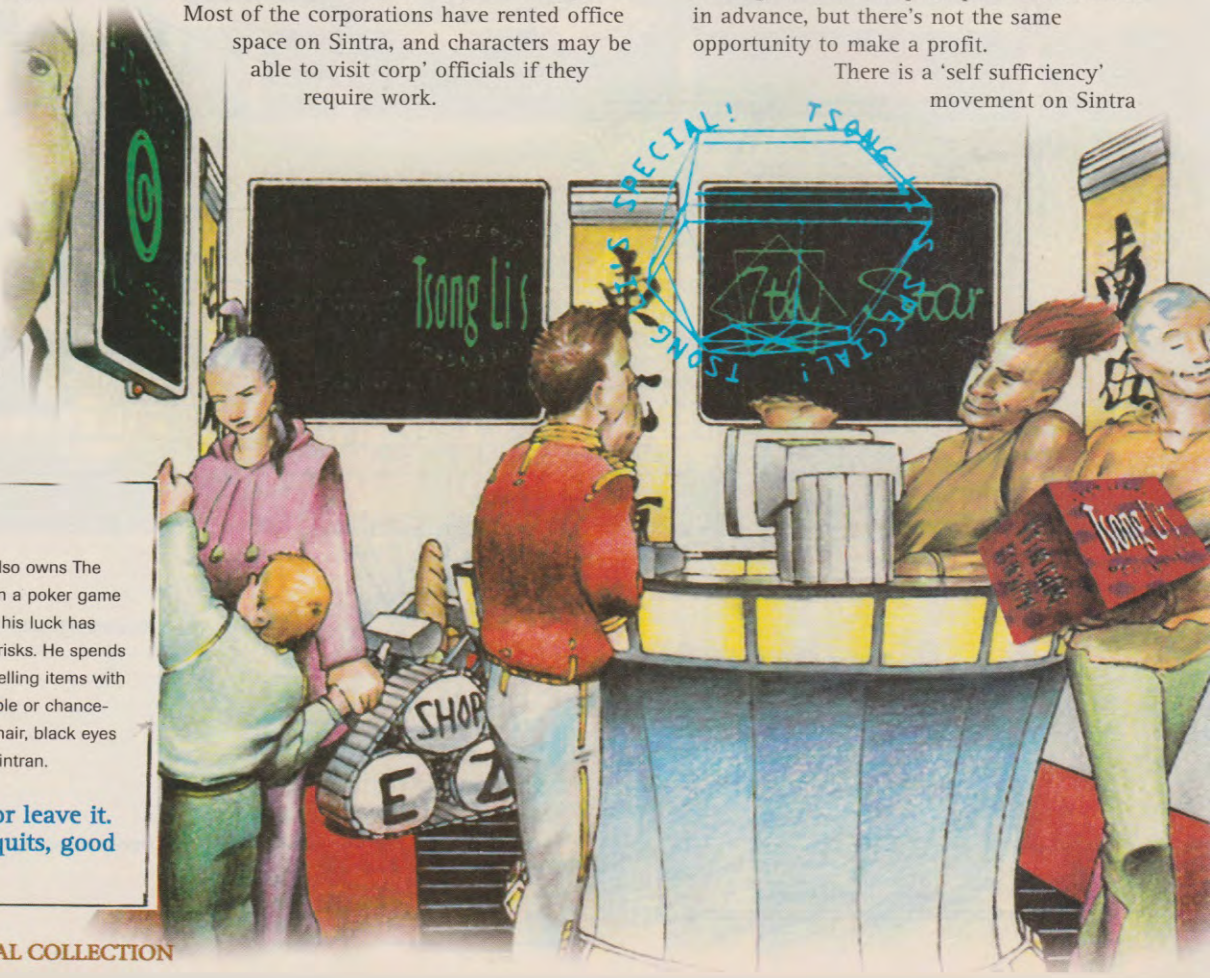
## Trading and the Exchange

Sintra exports organics from the planet as well as exotic and luxury food items and imports technological items and metals. Ships can buy cargo at the exchange. They can also buy and sell for themselves if they've capital. If they don't, then they must bid to deliver cargo for an established company. This is safer than independent dealing, because the price paid will be fixed in advance, but there's not the same opportunity to make a profit.

There is a 'self sufficiency' movement on Sintra

## The Inhabitants

Sintra is inhabited by an assortment of people, most of whom have lived on stations all their life and are equally suspicious of ships and planets. It is a city in space, and like any city it has people working in all occupations. There are plenty of hairdressers, cleaners and bartenders on Sintra, as well as space pilots, navigators and computer operators.

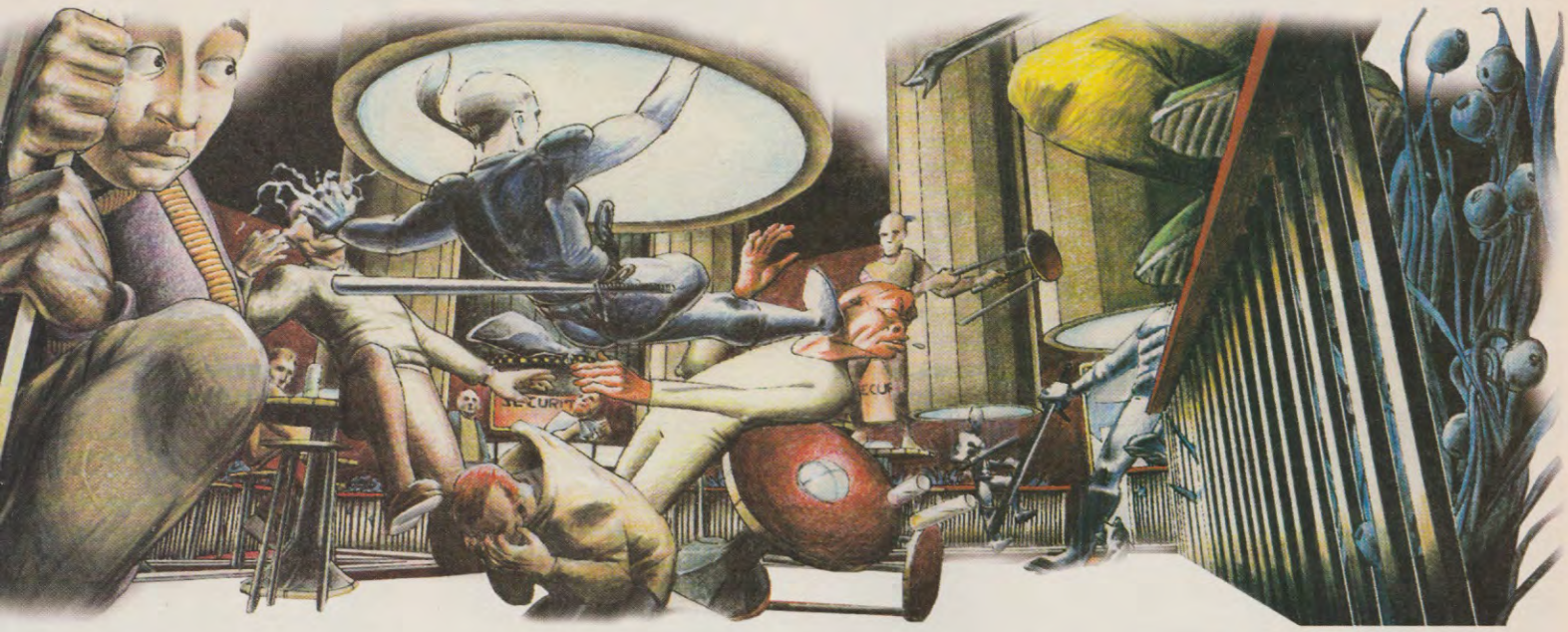



## Tsong Li

Mr. Li runs a shop on the docks. He also owns The Seventh Star bar outright, having won it in a poker game ten years ago. Since then, he believes his luck has changed and will not gamble or take any risks. He spends most of his time in his shop, buying and selling items with strangers. He refuses any possible gamble or chance-taking. He is tall and muscular, with red hair, black eyes and brown skin. He is a native Sintran.

**Quote: "Ten credits, take it or leave it. No, I will not do double or quits, good day to you."**

Illustration © arcane by Simon Gurr



which thinks a metals reconstitution industry should be developed in-system to reduce reliance on this trade. A ship returning to Sintra to find that this had been instituted might find itself out of pocket. In general, trade between Sintra and other star systems is lucrative. As well as physical items (carried in cans in ships holds) there's a trade in information – copyright artworks, scientific information and mail between systems. Information is a commodity, and the right to carry it to a system is bid for on the exchange.

The exchange is an electronic bulletin board where information about goods for sale and ships' destinations are discussed and bid for. People who cannot get to the exchange may access it at the dockmaster's office, the registry, or at various bars.

## The Council

The council is an elected body of ten which governs Sintra. It meets in the boardroom and makes all major decisions about running the station. At present, the two political parties are deadlocked with five members each, and can't agree on changes of policy. They're elected for a term of five years during which time they control Sintra completely. They meet for an hour every day to discuss issues. Elections are a fraught time because policy on such things as expansion, trade and controlling the planet may change completely. Elections are democratic, but six of the ten have remained the same for the last 15 years.

### Ro Cross

Ro is a calligrapher who works squatting cross-legged on the docks, writing letters for people, and making and selling decorative scrolls. He is an old man with no teeth who can be hard to understand. He also offers computer services. Most people have been importuned by him to buy a lucky scroll. What many people don't realise, though, is that he is also an expert forger who can produce good quality forged papers by hand and on computer. He pretends not to understand if approached for this by strangers. The best way to deal with him is by using subtlety, or by way of a contact of his such as Mr. Li.

**Quote: "Buy a lucky scroll, ma'am! Letters written, computer work! Any time!"**

### Linden Bowland

Linden is the head of security for Sintra. She can usually be found in the security main office. She is an ex-captain of a military ship, and often talks in military slang, which has been picked up by most of security. She left her ship here after completely losing a leg. (If regeneration exists, she has an unusual condition rendering her unable to use it.) She uses a cybernetic leg on most occasions, but has taught herself a complete unarmed combat fighting technique which she practices with only her natural body. She can beat 95 per cent of the population at unarmed combat, with or without her prosthesis. She also knows how to use a knife and various guns. The left side of her face is scarred which she leaves uncovered. Strangers tend to find her unusually direct and a little disconcerting. She keeps a stunner on her belt at all times, allowing her to shoot first and ask questions later.

**Quote: "Tell me everything you know about it, or I'll take you apart piece by piece. You know I mean it. Now start talking. Before I count to three. One, two..."**

## Note on Politics and Economics

Sintra is assumed to be an independent

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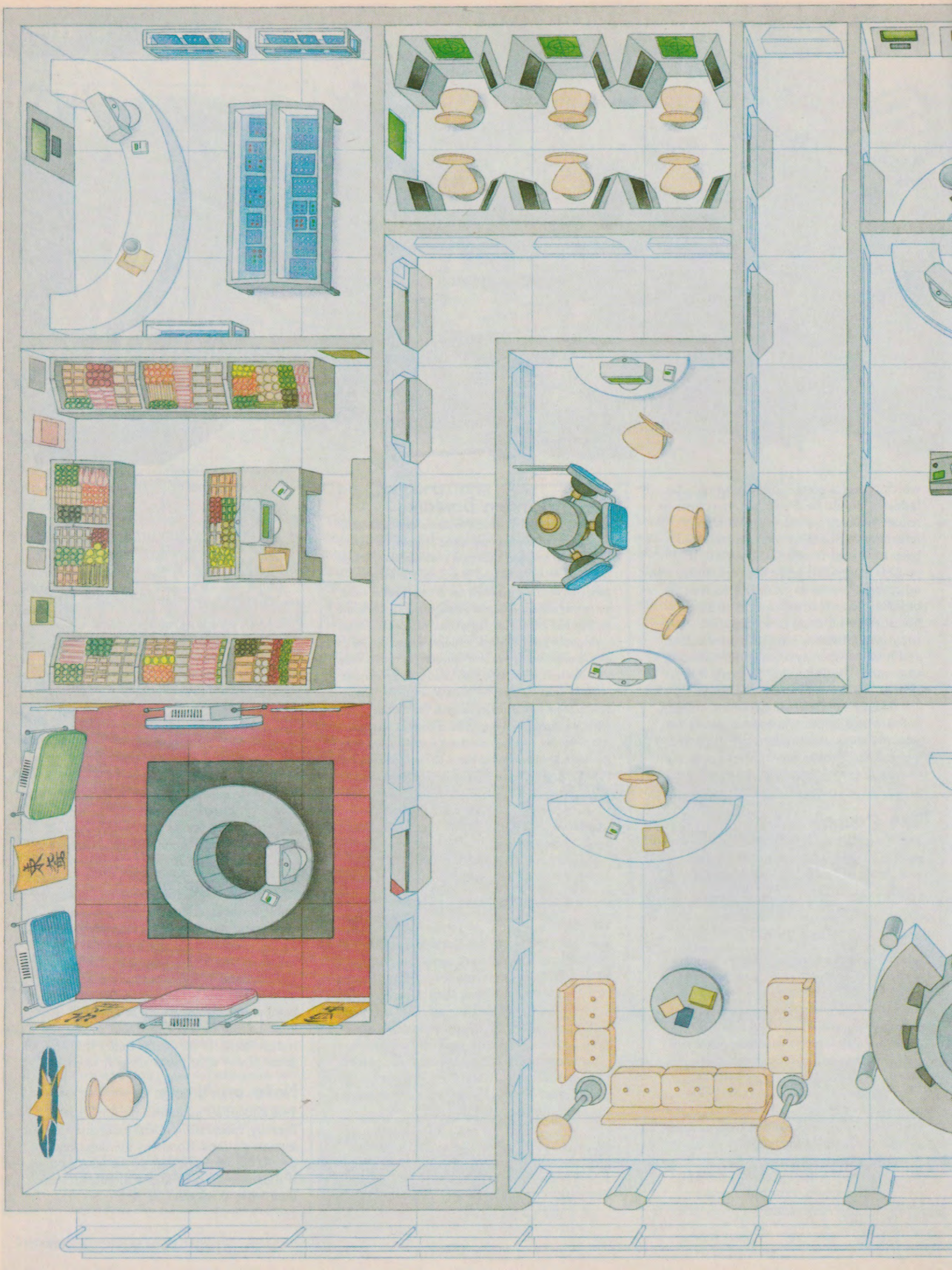
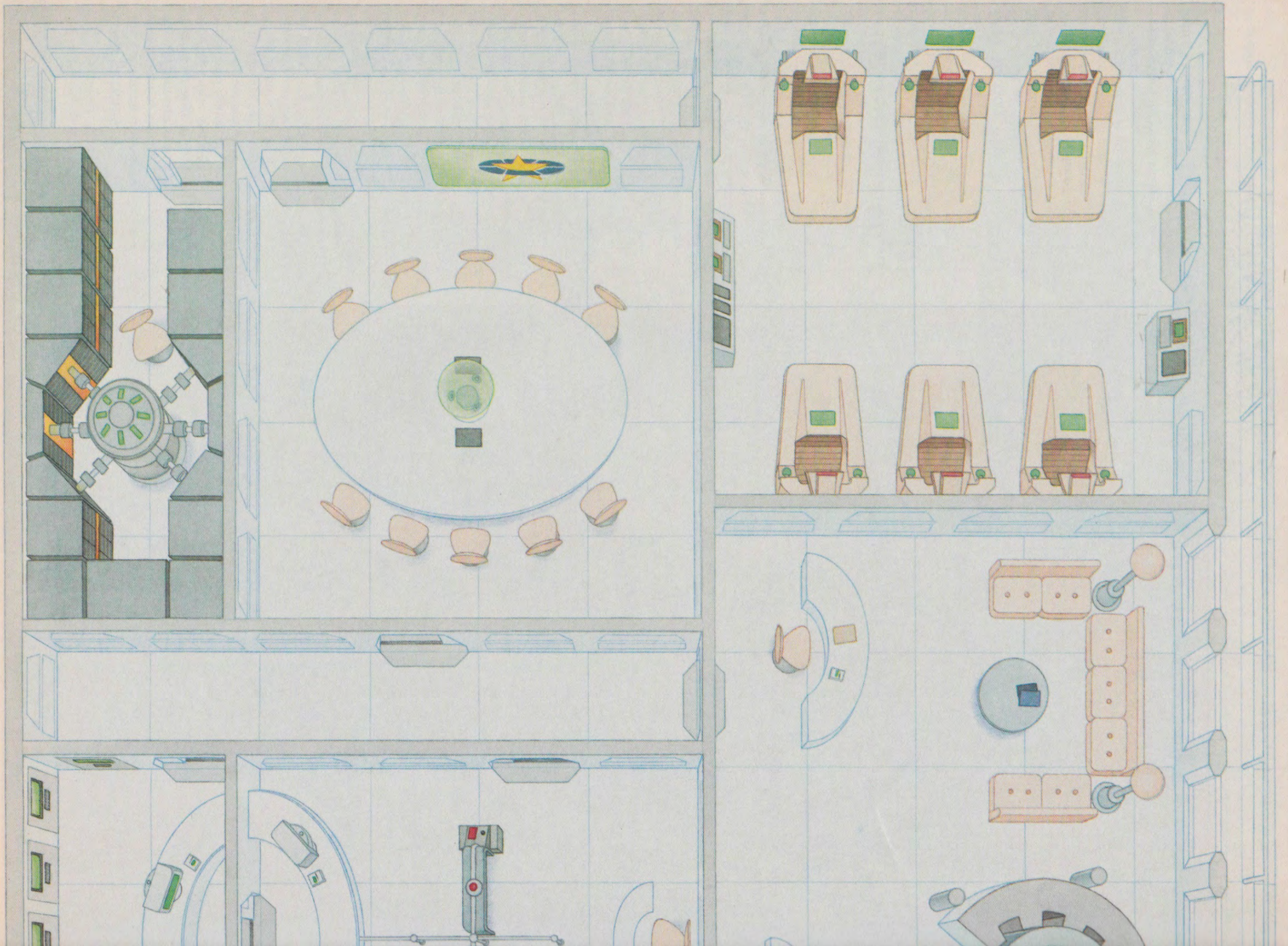
station which will accept anyone with legitimate papers, docking to trade. It is also assumed to exist in a universe in which interstellar trade is a worthwhile pursuit, and where there are many inhabited planets and space stations.

It orbits an inhabitable planet with a sapient native life form. It is thus a supply point for organics and exotic foodstuffs, wines and the like. Trade is carried out both by big corporations and by smaller independents. Other than that, the wider political and economic situation of the universe varies according to the particular campaign. If there are great alliances of stations, Sintra will endeavour to be independent, or to shelter under the wing of some power which will allow it freedom.

## Note on Aliens

This encounter assumes that intelligent friendly spacefaring aliens exist and dock at human stations. No aliens are described in detail, but they are part of the background. If there are no such aliens in your universe, then leave them out.





## Emergencies

The worst thing that can happen on a space station is losing air. This can happen through meteorite strikes, enemy action, internal sabotage or by the air plants breaking down. Sintra takes strong precautions against all these things.

There are meteor defences, station tugboat gunships to defend against attacks, a strong security force who are very wary of sabotage, and a six layer fail-safe on the air-plant. Internal saboteurs are considered to be the least likely, as they would have to be truly suicidal themselves to hope to succeed.

The station is arranged so that every section can be very quickly sealed from every other section in the event of air loss. These bulkhead seals slide across automatically in an emergency. There is no way to break them open once they are sealed short of major explosives. They can only be opened from the computers in the main security offices. They seal in any and all emergencies, not just air loss, but riots, attacks etc. This is standard on space stations; everyone who had ever been to one is likely to be aware of this.

Sintra, like all space stations, knows it is helpless before a near light-speed attack – it could be destroyed by one rock. Its only protection is to be too valuable to destroy. Such an attack would destroy it utterly, it cannot be taken and held by those means.

Anyone wanting to take Sintra will find very nasty insystem tugboats as defence, and all the traders in port can be pressed into acting as a local navy if required. Sintra sits above a valuable planet with plentiful organic supplies and thus cannot be starved out.

Other dangers to the station include instability of orbit – if too many ships break free at once the station can become unstable, in the worst case it could begin to descend through the atmosphere. The station is not intended to be moved and would burn up on re-entry. Fortunately even the most obsessed rebels are well aware of this fact.

## Day to day life

Even on the most high-tech space station, daily life is different from life on a planet. For ideas on getting the tone right, take a look at at this issue's arcane: the article starting on page 26, 'What on earth...', deals with living on constructed worlds, and the problems it brings.

For other ideas, see William Gibson's *Neuromancer*; the space station in the novel has many things in common with Sintra Station.

# Adventure seeds

## Being Recruited

Morgan O'Brien is here looking for a crew. A newly forming party, or an existing party which does not have a ship, could begin a new life aboard Columbine. This could either be straight adventuring on a ship, or it could involve discovering more about its captain and its mysterious past.

What these mysteries are can vary according to the referee – Morgan may have stolen the Columbine, or he could have won it in a bet, inherited it from a relative, or been the last survivor aboard when it was attacked by space pirates. He might tell one of these stories while denying the truth. He will try to tempt people to join him, without being frank about his background or his intentions. He will be reluctant to trust these people.

It is also possible to play this scenario backwards, in which case the party has a ship and wishes to recruit a crew, and has to try to find trustworthy people.

## Trading

It is possible to become rich trading to and fro from Sintra, and it is also possible to lose everything. The life of a small independent is perilous, and the exchange goes up and down according to rumours. When running a trading campaign it is best to let the trade be part of the background, except occasionally when it becomes vitally important.

For instance, the party may want to bid to carry a certain piece of information because they want to know it, and the bidding might be fierce. Or there is a shortage of whatever they are bringing in, and there is competitive bidding for it, leaving them temporarily embarrassed by riches. Such a windfall will be fairly public. If they attempt to live the high life, make sure they are also pestered by indigents, panhandlers and begging letters from people who are adamant they are deserving causes.

Equally, it is possible to do the reverse of this scenario and have them end up in the dock with cargo, which for some reason has become worthless and is now running up big dock charges.

## Feud

While you're minding your own business, relaxing in The Seventh Star, a member of another crew doesn't like the way you look. Anything is sufficient to start a bar brawl, but this one doesn't stop there.

The other ship starts to spread rumours about you and which spoils your trade. Maybe it even steals your deals and breaks into the cargo which is waiting to be delivered.

A fight could easily break out in reception while two groups happen to be waiting at the same time. Any number of petty incidents can happen on Sintra. A feud that begins in a small way may end up as a pitched battle in deepest space.

## The Gamble

Tsong Li thinks he has lost his luck and refuses to gamble. Then one day he is tricked into it, and loses. To fulfil the bet and avoid losing his shop and bar, he is supposed to bring back a particular item from another alien space station within a specified time limit. He hires the party either to take him there or to bring it to him.

## Corporate War

Two corporations clash, and one of them hires you as independents to harass the other without it seeming to be involved.

When things go wrong, your employers may want the party 'dealt with' in order to keep it quiet.

## Paper Chase

You're ready to leave Sintra but you find to your irritation that your papers aren't in order – you're sent from one office to another filling in forms while a big corporation attempts to take over the ship.

## Election Time

There is an election coming up in Sintra, and all its darkest corners are being swept – the bright light of attention is shining just about everywhere and absolutely nothing can go on in the shadows.

Bribery vanishes, cosy deals are suddenly news, and one party claims it will deal only with the corporations if it comes to power. Unfortunately, independents have no votes – can they get their point across?

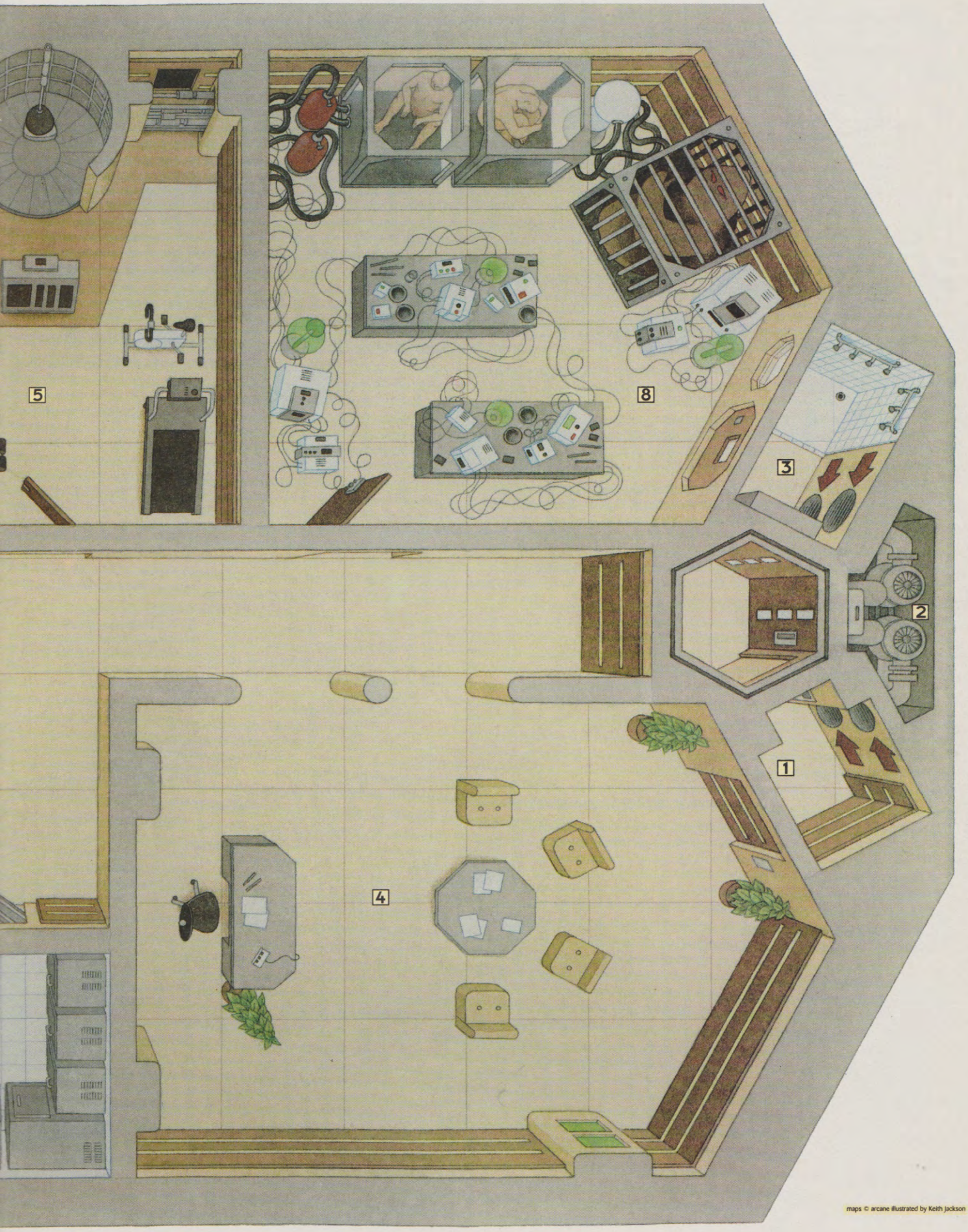
## Unknown Alien

An alien of an unknown species has escaped from a ship and is hiding out in the station's ventilation systems. Several people have been found murdered and panic and rumours are spreading of the hideous monster in the ducts.

Is it really a malevolent creature, or is it just misunderstood? The party is hired to sort it out, or becomes involved against its will when one of its members goes missing.

## For More Information

*Traveller*, *2300AD*, *GURPS Space* and *Star Wars* are all good systems for playing space opera games, and they all contain backgrounds which are suitable for this particular station. Sintra was largely inspired by the *Alliance/Union* and *Chanur* books of C.J. Cherryh, which come highly recommended by arcane as great reads as well as sources of excellent adventure ideas.

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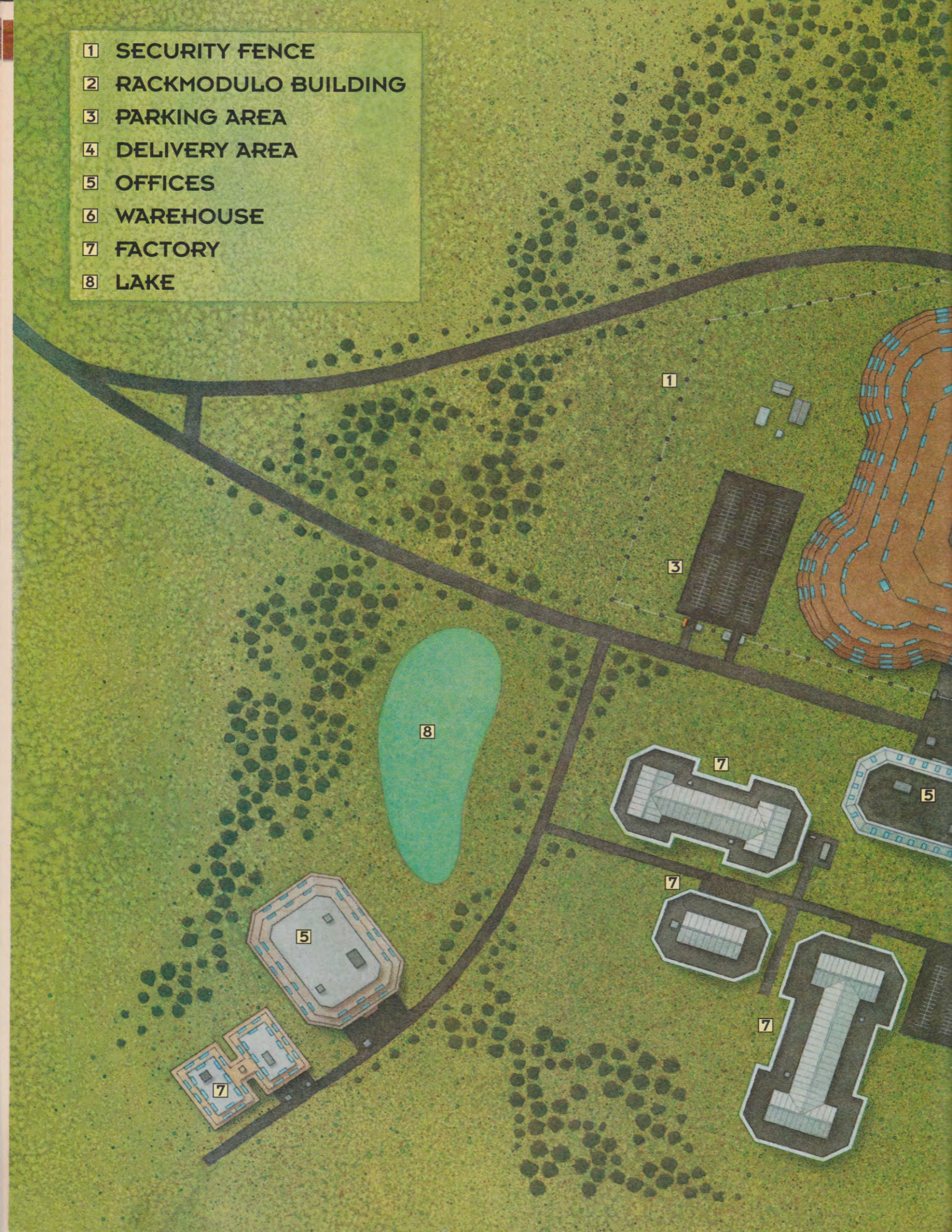
1 SECURITY FENCE
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4 DELIVERY AREA
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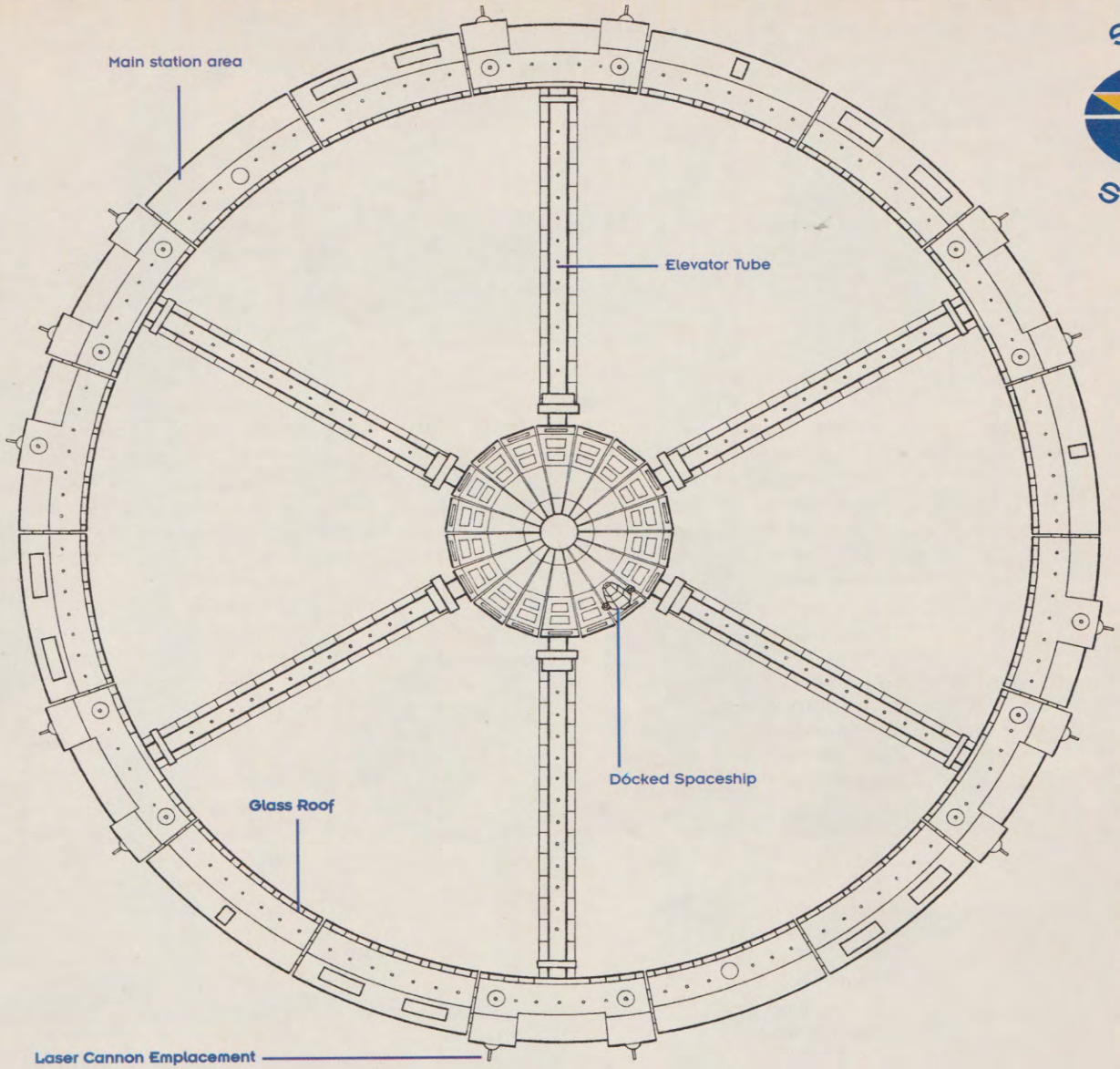
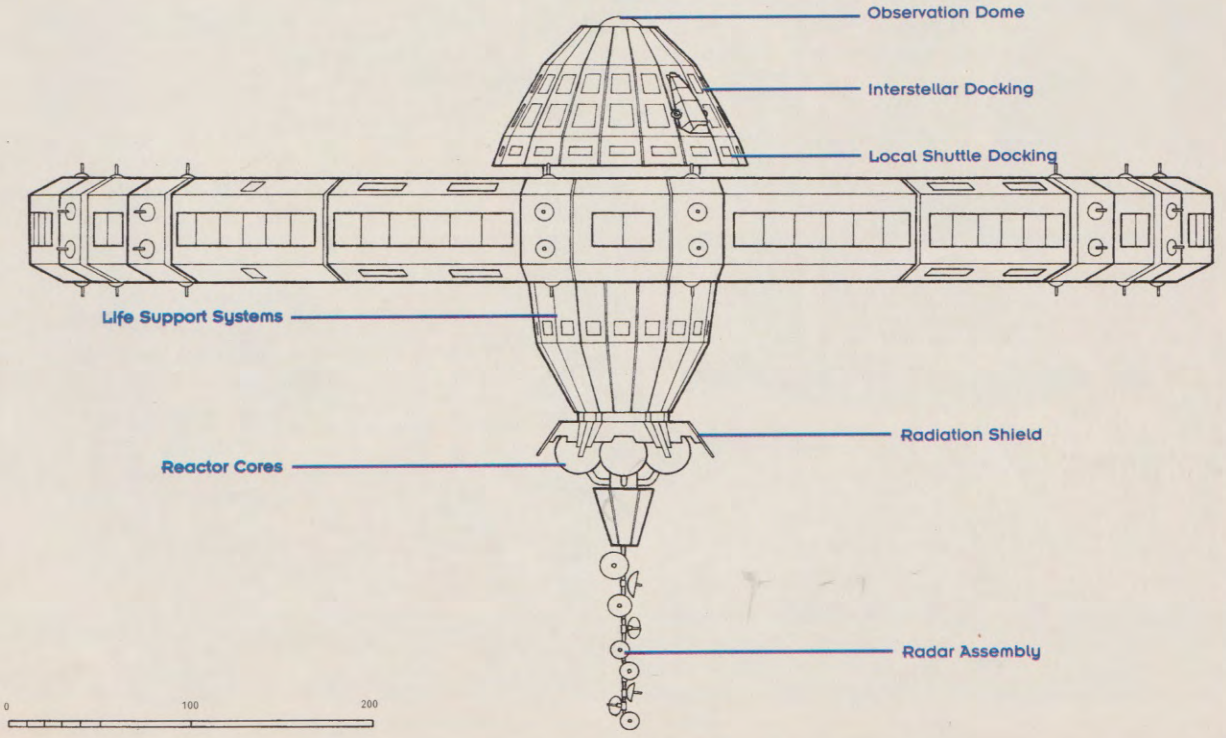



SINTRA STATION

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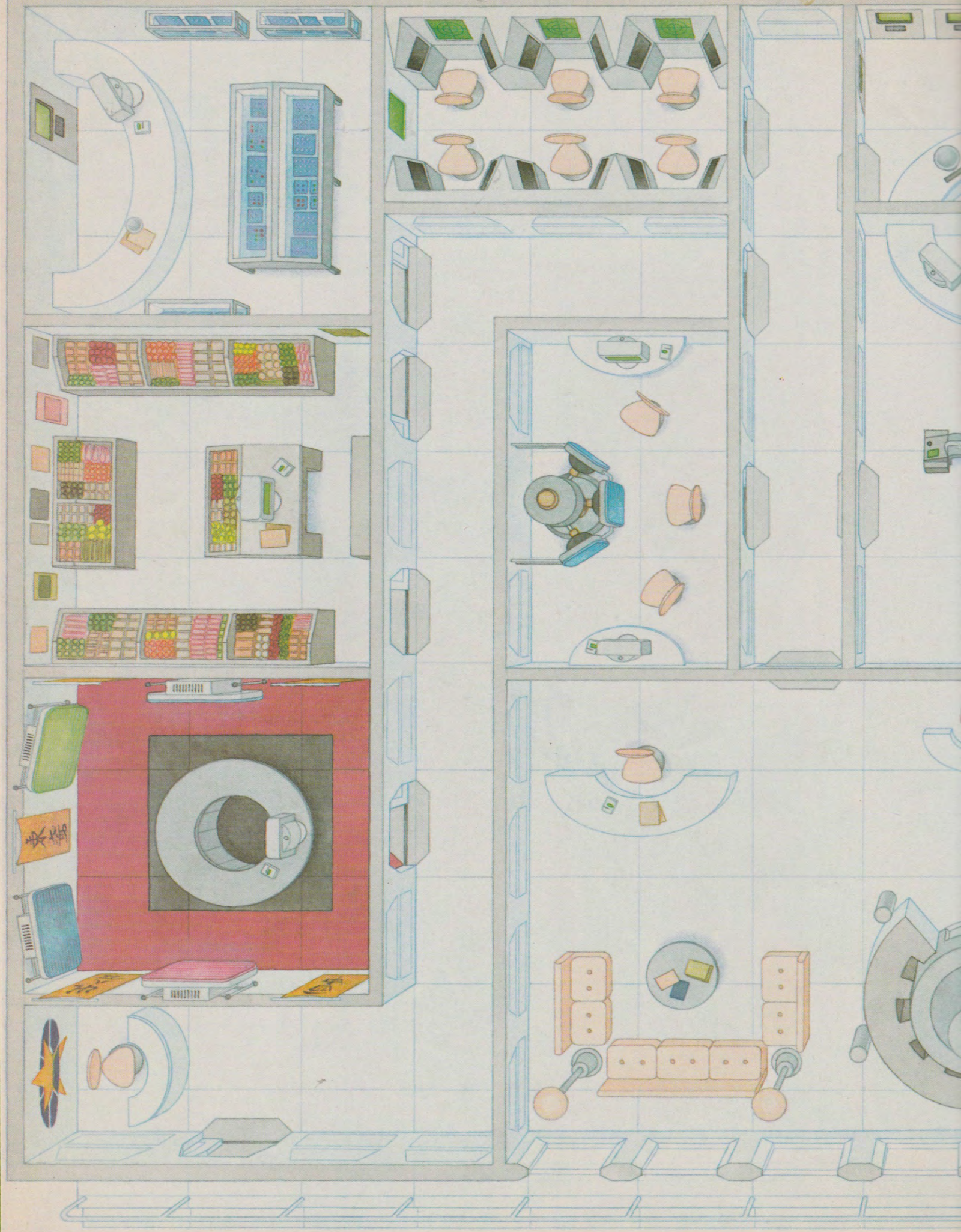

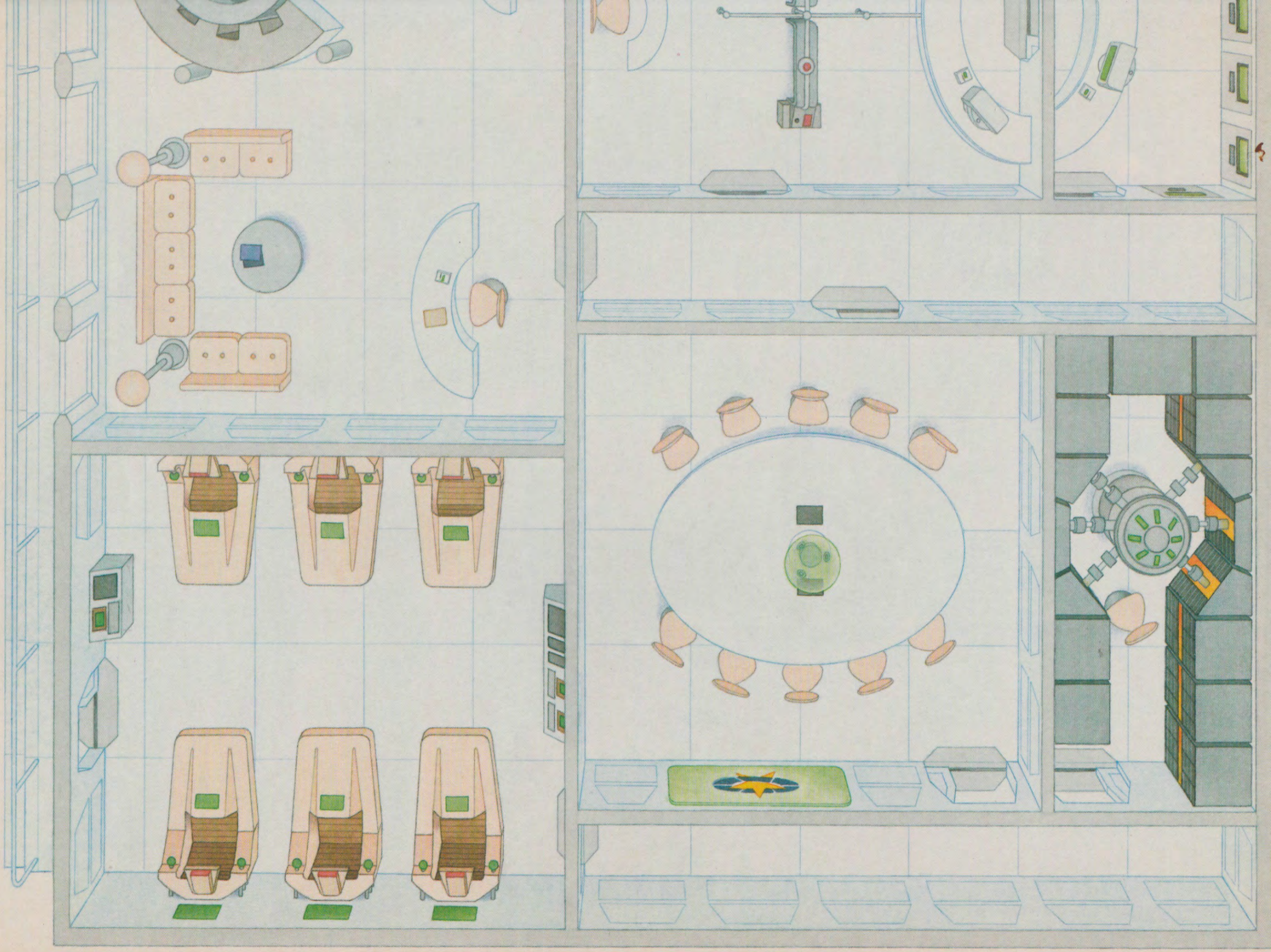

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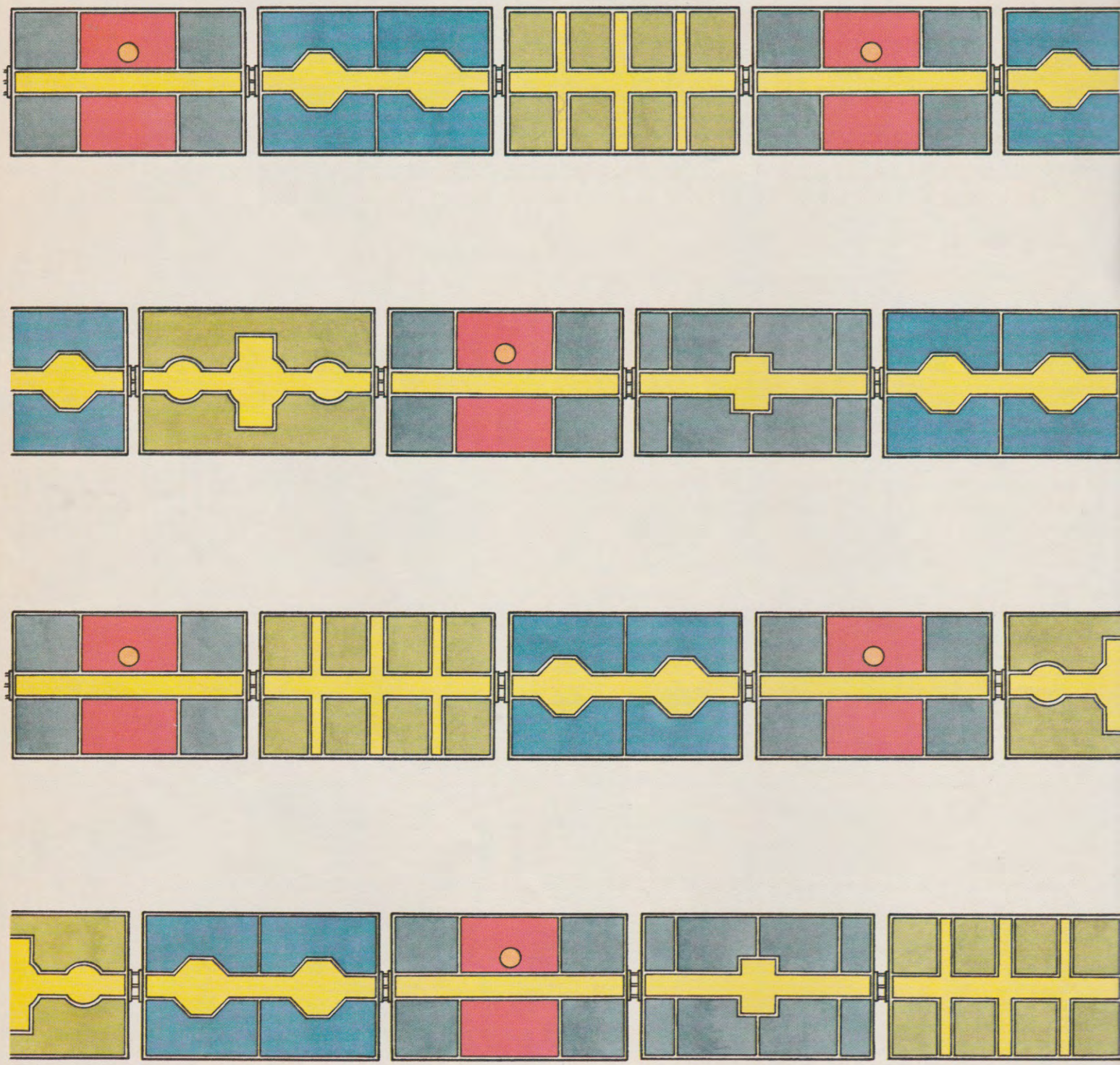
# SCHEMATIC OF MAIN STATION AREA



SINTRA STATION

- ADMINISTRATIVE
- COMMERCIAL
- ELEVATOR TUBE
- MAIN THOROUGHFARE
- MILITARY
- RESIDENTIAL

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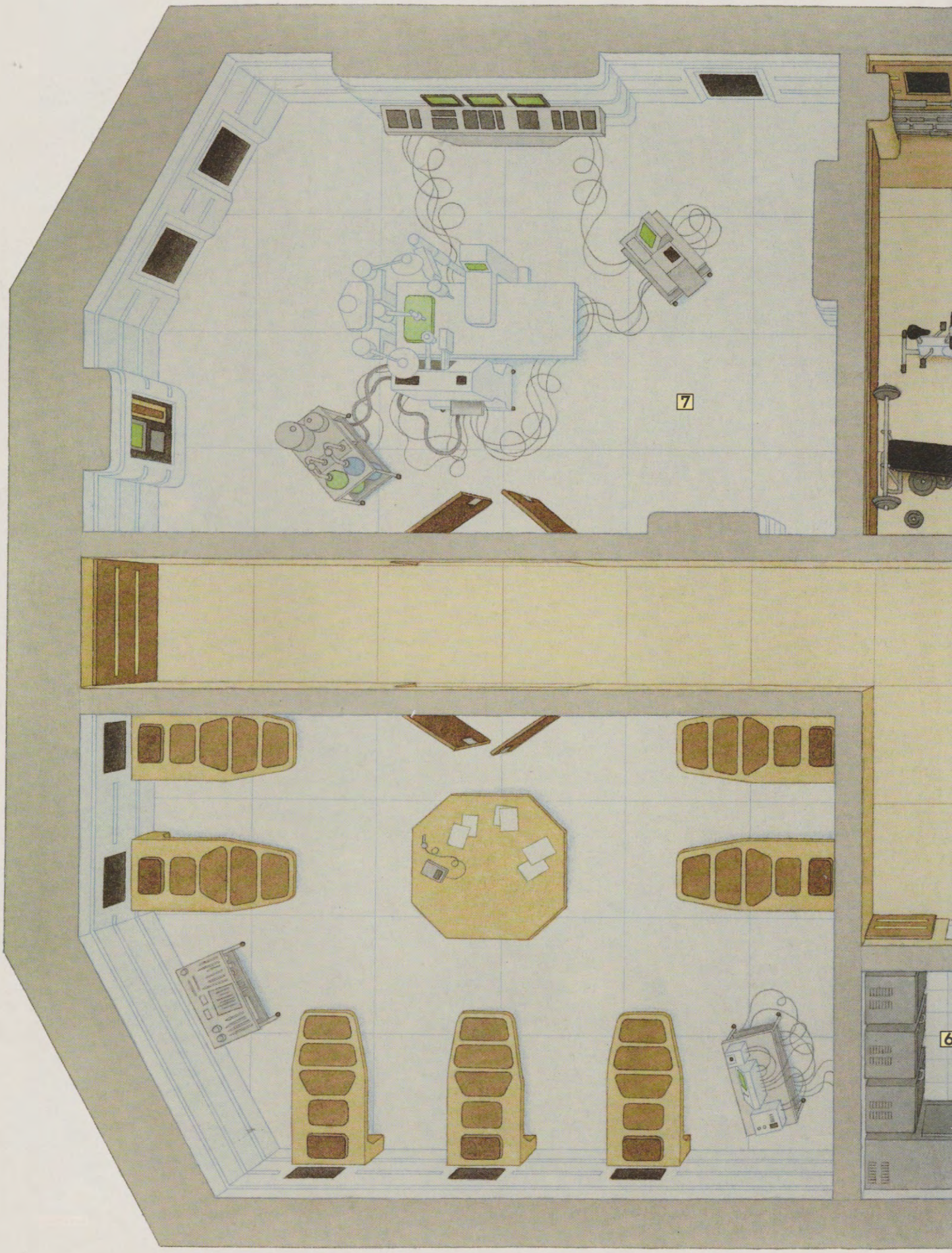
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6

# Full scenario

## Bring me the head of Linden Bowland

The PCs are on Sintra Station looking for work when they meet Morgan O'Brien, who needs crew. It's probably best to make their reason for joining him something that will fit your campaign – he's going in a direction they want to go, he's planning to explore an interesting planet etc. (Maybe he's headed for the planet Idoon, looking for the secret of eternal life – see arcane 17.)

## Bar room brawling

The PCs spend a couple of days helping load cargo, sorting out their papers and so on. During this time they can get to know the station a little better. Maybe they get involved in a bar brawl in the Seventh Star and have a run-in with Linden Bowland – they ought to have a fair idea of how tough she is before the main part of the scenario starts.

They should also make friends with Coyote Tenn – she can't give them passage on her ship, but is sympathetic and willing to help. Maybe they could find her drunk in the bar, depressed over the loss of her son.

## The night before...

The night before they're due to leave in the morning, Morgan tells them there's been a change of plan. He has some business to attend to first. He will need to be pressed to reveal the following story.

Four years ago, there was a rebellion on the planet Tusane. Although this was a minor uprising, the local forces came down unusually ruthlessly on the rebels. Everyone in the city was shot. This included Morgan's whole family who were visiting; Morgan himself was left aboard the ship and watched helplessly from orbit.

The officer in charge at Tusane was General Alika Gable. Since this incident, she disappeared. Official word was she'd been killed, but there were persistent rumours that she'd been wounded and given a change of identity. Morgan has discovered, from Ro Cross, that the missing general is, Linden Bowland. Morgan is determined to get revenge.

## Revenge!

The PCs may have their own reasons for wanting revenge on Bowland, Gable or Sintra. Or they may just think it's a good cause. They may decide that if they don't help Morgan, he's going to be killed and they'll end up stuck on Sintra again. He will refuse to give up all hope of revenge.

The simplest approach is to go into Linden's office, guns blazing. This is less than subtle, and will probably lead to their getting shot down by Security on their way back to the ship. A more careful plan is needed. Coyote Tenn can be recruited to the cause – she has her own reasons for hating the errant general – the matter of one of her sons, who had a relationship with Linden and then had a little "accident" with a leaky space-suit when he was no longer fun to have around. Coyote is not prepared to endanger her ship or its crew, but is prepared to cause a diversion.

## Coyote's plan

Coyote's plan is this. Someone must gain access to the communications channels on Sintra, and patch in a direct connection between Thunder on the Mountain's comm and the station loudspeakers. This could possibly be done by hacking the station's computer, but would probably be more fun if the PCs have to infiltrate the stations comms room (lots of crawling through air shafts?).

The following day, Coyote uses the PCs' work to put out a public announcement, saying that Linden Bowland is General Alika Gable, the Tyrant of Tusane. She is leaving station immediately, and advises all right-thinking ship's captains to do the same. (The PCs should get a chance to help her word this message.) The PCs should have their space suits on, because after this thirty second warning, Thunder on the Mountain pulls clear of station without disconnecting the airlock and fuel-feeds, leaving a gaping hole in dockside.

## Battle royale

Immediately, blast doors begin closing around the dock area, and large numbers of security guards begin running about shooting. Other ships realise that Sintra has become a dangerous place, and start pulling free. Space around the station becomes a chaos of ships accelerating in all directions, none under the command of traffic control.

Station gunboats are launched, and the laser turrets manned, but Coyote's ship is in the middle of a cloud of other ships and cannot be fired on without hitting innocent traders. In this confusion, Linden is running around shouting orders; hopefully, while some of the PCs power up the Columbine, others will be able to kill or capture Linden in the confusion, and then escape Sintra with the other ships.

A space battle may follow. They'll never be able to visit Sintra again, and may have the security forces of half the galaxy after them – but that's another story.

*Statistics for* **Traveller** *and* **Star Wars** *are printed overleaf. These are meant as an aid for GMs using those systems, but do not preclude the use of any other games system when running this scenario.*

## Coyote Tenn

Coyote is the captain of her independent family ship, the Thunder on the Mountain. She is very tall, copper-skinned, and has black hair and eyes. She is 58 years old and highly intelligent. Her crew comprises 15 people, all related to her by blood. She is a sharp trader who makes money on all her deals, and is much respected among all those who know about ships. She has stopped fights between crews on the dock with her bare hands. Although she does not realise it, Coyote is regarded as a leader among the independents, and what she says effects how they think about things. She spends much of her time in space, travelling where the profit is and not keeping a regular route. She visits Sintra fairly frequently.

**Quote: "Why don't you calm down a little and think about what you're doing here, son? On board the Thunder on the Mountain we count to ten before we open our mouths in anger. But when we lose our tempers there's no holding back."**

## Farren Kendall

Farren is the dockmaster. She is small and dark with a very loud voice and huge amounts of presence. She was born on Sintra, and all her loyalty is to the station. She is good at organising and manages to keep everyone happy, including the big corporations, the small independents and the local inhabitants. Of course, if people clash, she feels the independents are the easiest to squeeze because they have the least power to affect Sintra. She will accept 'gifts' to facilitate whatever is wanted, but cannot be bribed into anything that harms the station, or what she perceives as her long-term interests.

**Quote: "Thank you very much, sir, that will ease you up the list of departures. Another 50? Is there any particular reason you are in such a hurry to leave our beautiful station, sir?"**

## Morgan O'Brien

Morgan is 15, but his papers say that he is 19. He has just arrived on Sintra. He is extremely confident, charming and very attractive. Although he is not large, he looks as if he can handle himself in a fight. He always has an answer, in any circumstance, and can usually manage to talk his way out of trouble. He has a concealed past and is the captain of his own spaceship, the Columbine. He will lie about his planet of origin and is on Sintra seeking both cargo and a crew. Morgan has little capital for buying cargo, and he hopes to pick up a good deal. He is an excellent pilot, but finds it difficult to handle the ship alone for long periods.

**Quote: "I can offer you an excellent opportunity to further your career – and think of the fun we could have travelling between the stars!"**

# Character Statistics

**We can't offer statistics for *all* space games, but here they are for the two most popular...**

## STAR WARS

Sintra Station is probably best placed in an area of space still controlled by the Imperium. The Council is probably just a figurehead authority, with an Imperial Governer having ultimate authority.

Farren Kendall, Oliver Yon and Linden Bowland are all Imperial officers, though Farren might be persuaded to come over to the Alliance if she thought it could help the station better. Morgan, on the other hand, would join the Rebellion like a shot, if the players give him the chance.

### Morgan O'Brien

**DEXTERITY 3D+2:** Blaster 4D+2, Brawling Parry 4D+2
**KNOWLEDGE 2D+2:** Streetwise 3D+2
**MECHANICAL 3D:** Starship Piloting 5D
**PERCEPTION 3D+2:** Bargain 4D+2, Con 4D+2
**STRENGTH 2D+1:** Brawling 3D+1
**TECHNICAL 2D+1**

### Farran Kendall

**DEXTERITY 3D**
**KNOWLEDGE 4D:** Alien Races 5D, Bureaucracy 5D, Cultures 5D, Languages 5D
**MECHANICAL 3D**
**PERCEPTION 4D:** Bargain 5D, Command 5D, Con 5D
**STRENGTH 2D**
**TECHNICAL 2D**

### Oliver Yon

**DEXTERITY 3D+1:** Blaster 4D+1
**KNOWLEDGE 3D+1:** Alien Races 4D+1, Bureaucracy 5D+1, Languages 3D+1
**MECHANICAL 2d+2**
**PERCEPTION 4D:** Command 5D, Search 5D
**STRENGTH 2D+2**
**TECHNICAL 2D**

### Linden Bowland

**DEXTERITY 4D:** Blaster 5D, Brawling Parry 5D, Dodge 5D
**KNOWLEDGE 2D+2**
**MECHANICAL 3D:** Starship Gunnery 5D
**PERCEPTION 3D:** Command 4D, Hide/Sneak 4D, Search 4D
**STRENGTH 3D:** Brawling 4D, Climbing/Jumping 4D
**TECHNICAL 3D:** Security 4D

### Tsong Li

Gambling 4D, all other Attributes and Skills 2D

### Rachel Halsinger

**DEXTERITY 3D:** Blaster 4D
**KNOWLEDGE 2D:** Planetary Systems 3D
**MECHANICAL 4D:** Astrogation 6D, Starship Piloting 5D
**PERCEPTION 3D:** Bargain 4D
**STRENGTH 3D**
**TECHNICAL 3D:** Starship Repair 4D

### Coyote Tenn

**DEXTERITY 3D+2:** Blaster 4D+2
**KNOWLEDGE 2D:** Bureaucracy 3D, Cultures 3D, Planetary Systems 3D
**MECHANICAL 3D+2:** Astrogation 4D+2
**PERCEPTION 3D:** Bargain 5D, Command 5D
**STRENGTH 2D+2**
**TECHNICAL 3D**

### Ro Cross

Forgery 4D (Knowledge), Streetwise 3D, all other skills at 2D

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## Marc Miller's TRAVELLER®

Sintra Station should fit well into any Traveller background, whatever the period. It is obviously on a well-travelled communications route, and is a Class A Starport.

### Morgan O'Brien

Morgan is impossibly young for his skills; he is presumed to come from a peculiar Average or High Stellar background, having been born and raised on a merchant ship.

*His papers say:*

**7B6AA8 19 1 term** Title to COLUMBINE
Pilot 2 Ship's Boat 2 Navigation 1 Vac-suit 0 Gun Combat 0 Computer 0 Gravitics 0

*He's really:*

**7B6AA8 15 0 term** Title to COLUMBINE
Pilot 3 Streetwise 2 Admin 1 Navigation 1 Vac-suit 1 Gun Combat 0 Computer 0 Gravitics 0
Homeworld: fake, pick one to fit your scenario
Born: present – 15 years
Position: Captain/Owner of the COLUMBINE
Typical Possessions: hand computer, TL15 tailored vac suit

### Farren Kendall

Docks and Locks
**6789A9 38 5 terms** 25 kCr savings
Liason 4 Admin 3 Streetwise 3 Gravitics 2 Vac-suit 2 Electronics 1 Vac-suit 0 Gun Combat 0 Gravitics 0
Homeworld: Sintra Station, Starport B, Station, Vacuum, No Water, Low, Moderate Law, Average Stellar
Born: present minus 38
Position: Sintra Dockmaster
Typical Possessions: TL14 tailored vac suit, custom holo/vid communicator with *lots* of channels and overrides

### Oliver Yon

Customs
**6868CA 60 10 terms** 5 kCr savings, pension fund
Admin 6 Legal 3 Streetwise 2 Medical 2 Electronics 2 Gravitics 1 Origami 2 Vac-suit 1 Gun combat 0
Homeworld: Starport A, Station, Vacuum, No Water, Low, High Law, Average Stellar
Born: present – 60 years
Position: Cheif of Customs, Sintra Station
Typical Possessions: TL15 tailored vacc suit, hand light, small chemical essay kit, secretary robot with its own gravs and a holovid recorder with a 360 degree view; it follows him everywhere.

### Linden Bowland

Station Security (retired Imperial Navy)
**99AACA 42 6 terms** 10 kCr weapons collection, Navy Pension
Brawling 4 Pilot 2 Admin 2 Liason 2 Legal 1 Computer 1 Ships Boat 1 Navigation 1 Handgun 2 Large Blade 1 Vac Suit 1
Homeworld: Starport C, Medium, Dense, Wet, Moderate Population, High Law, Early Stellar
Born: Present – 42 years
Position: Chief of Security
Typical Possessions: TL15 tailored vac suit, handcom, stunner, gauss pistol, carried concealed.

### Tsong Li

Hospitality Services
**887796 31 2 terms** cash
Steward 4 Legal 2 Streetwise 2 Brawling 2 Vac-suit 0
Homeworld: Sintra Station, Starport B, Station, Vacuum, No Water, Low, Moderate Law, Average Stellar
Born: present – 31
Position: Owner, Seventh Star Bar
Typical Possessions: tends to carry a cosh in his back pocket.

### Rachel Halsinger

Merchant spacer
**6878A7 22 1 term** 500 Cr
Navigation 3 Computer 1 Ships Boat 1 VacSuit 1 Gun Combat 0 Gravitics 0
Homeworld: Spacer; grew up on ships
Born present – 22
Position unemployed
Typical Possessions: handcomputer, holvid crystal reader and crystals containing a navigational almanack and reference materials.

### Coyote Tenn

Merchant spacer
**8A9CB9 58 10 terms** 10 kCr Title to THUNDER
Liason 4 Pilot 3 Admin 2 Navigation 2 Engineering 2 Vacsuit 2 Brawling 2 Legal 1 Medical 1 JOT 1 Steward 1 Gun Combat 0
Homeworld: Spacer, grew up on ships
Born: present – 58
Position: Captain and CEO of the family ship THUNDER ON THE MOUNTAIN
Typical Possessions: TL15 tailored vac suit, electronic clipboard with manifests, bills of lading, route information, etc., and a compiece set to her ship.

### Ro Cross

Calligrapher/forger
**4B68A4 Age 68 10 terms** 10 kCr lots of contacts
Forgery 4 Calligraphy 3 Computer 4 Streetwise 3 Jack-of-All-Trades 1 Electronics 1 Vac-suit 0 Gun Combat 0 Gravitics 0
Homeworld: Avg or High stellar; as appropriate
Born: present – 68
Position: dockside scroll seller
Typical Possessions: pens, brushes, ink pots, lap desk, and a variety of paper. Hidden somewhere on his person is a very capable hand computer; this computer is the key to his rooms and his various stashes of cash.

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Issue 1

SOLD OUT!

**Issue 2** explored *AD&D: Skills & Powers*, interviewed Richard Garfield and the Encounter starred The Golden Dragon Inn.

**Issue 3** had a free RPG called *Skool Roolz*, reviewed *Cybergeneration* and Mr Smith's Emporium was that month's Encounter.

**Issue 4** explained RPGs for beginners, reviewed *Middle-Earth: The Wizards* and Stormburg materialised in the Encounter.

**Issue 5** had Richard Garfield's ideas in *Netrunner*, reviewed *Vampire: The Dark Ages* and the Train pulled into our Encounter.

**Issue 6** explained why the Christian Right wants to ban RPGs, reviewed *Netrunner* and gave you a Keep in the Encounter pull-out.

**Issue 7** looked at creating a horror scenario, sent you to Prison in our pull-out Encounter and reviewed *Conspiracy X*.

**Issue 8** discussed mysticism in games, offered free trials on 20 PBM games, reviewed *Alliances* and went into Space in the Encounter.

Issue 9

SOLD OUT!

**Issue 10** saw the return of *Traveller*, uncovered the secrets of The Dig in our pull-out Encounter and reviewed *The London Guidebook*.

**Issue 11** looked at cyberpunk, reported from GenCon and took you to the Circus in the Encounter. We also reviewed *Fading Suns*.

**Issue 12** debated the use of politics in RPGs, climbed aboard the Pirate Ship in the Encounter and reviewed a revised *Star Wars* RPG.

**Issue 13** is lucky for any budding referees, first time LARPers and *Deadlands* or *Mirage* players. We visit Starkmoor Hall in the Encounter.

**Issue 14** had the readers' 50 top RPGs, a deep-space probe in Encounters, a selection of *Mirage* combos and reviewed *Settlers*.

**Issue 15** investigated conspiracy campaigns, placed its bets on the MegaCasino in Encounters, and reviewed *Ars Magica*.

**Issue 16** published John Tynes' new RPG *Puppetland*, eyed the Superhero genre and reviewed 28 new releases. The Encounter was in the monastery.

**Issue 17** reviewed *Visions* and *Masks of Nyarlathotep*, examined Celtic culture and went to the ancient library in the Encounter.

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**We here at Golden Age Productions pride ourselves on delivering hard to find props and costume accessories**

## Pulse Rifle

This is a must for every Marine. This is our number one seller and hard to keep in stock due to the fact of large bug infestations. Please call for availability. Price is $200.00 unassembled and unpainted. Painted and assembled is $450.00.
Code: PX-200-PULR

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The human and his large hairy companion may still be looking for this one. So if you take it home, be looking over your shoulder. Especially in a distant galaxy far, far away..... $55.00
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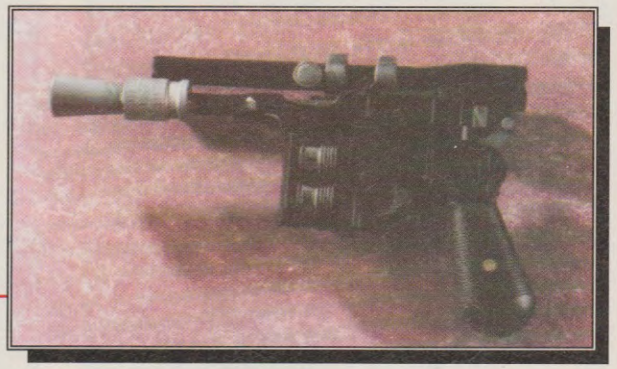

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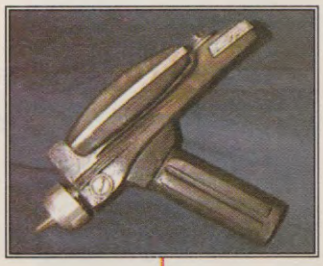

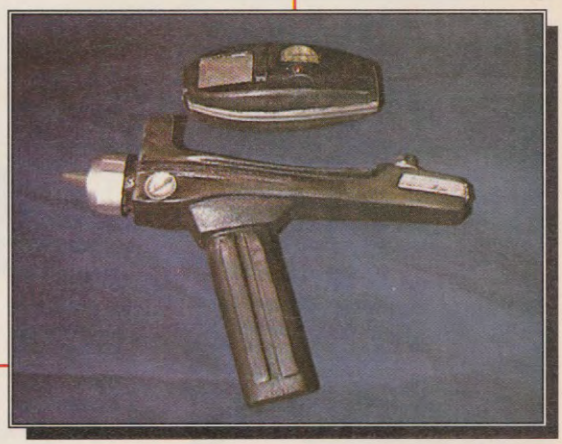

## Mark II, Type II Phaser

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Comes in 2 main pieces, easy to assemble.
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**$65**

## Alien Combat Knife

Side blades retract with switch.

With sheath **$55**

Resin Kit **$25**

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## Alien Short Sword

**$35.00 - Aluminium**
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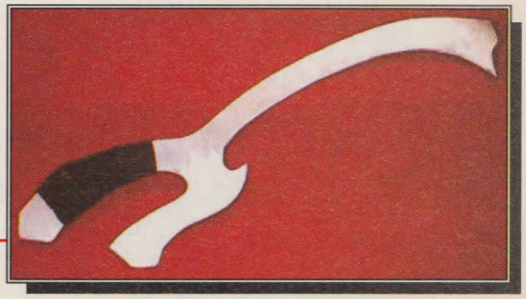
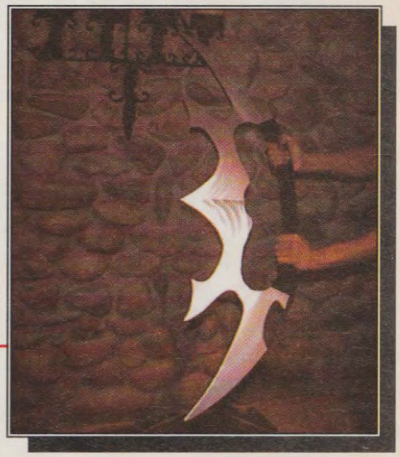
**$120.00 - Stainless**



## Alien Ancient Bat'leth

**Measures 48.5 inches tip to tip**
**$200.00 - Aluminium. IS-001-ANCA**
**$550.00 - Stainless. IS-002-ANCS**



## Alien Show Bat'leth

**The Showpiece is not combat balanced and weighs 2.5 lbs**
**Measures 92.5 centimetres tip to tip.**
**$150.00 - Aluminium**
**Code: IS-004-COMB**

## Alien Combat Bat'leth

**Combat Bat'leth is precision balanced. It's made of 3/8" aircraft aluminum, 37" tip to tip, 2.3 lbs. $125.00**
**Code: IS-003-COMB**

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This is a one handed model
for florentine fighting.
These sell for $40.00 each.
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**$16**

## Traditional ceremonial spear.

Beautiful enmass! $75.00

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**$350.00 as shown. NF-001-BALE**
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**Colonial Space Marine Armour coming soon !**
**(Not just another bug hunt)**

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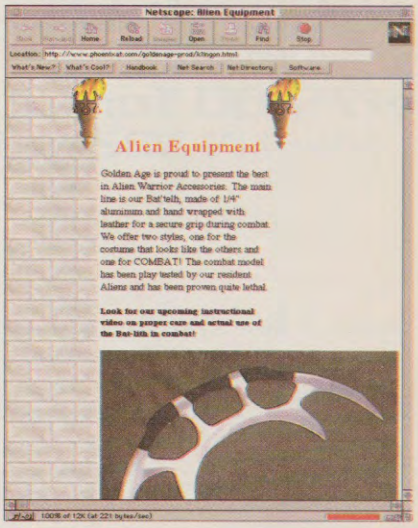
Netscape: Alien Equipment
Alien Equipment
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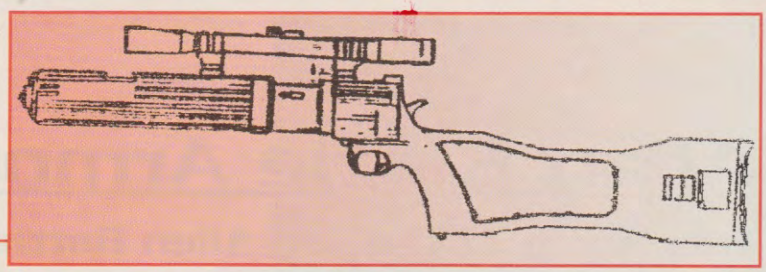
## Bounty Hunter's Rifle

Previously owned by an employee of a large slug?!

**$95.00**

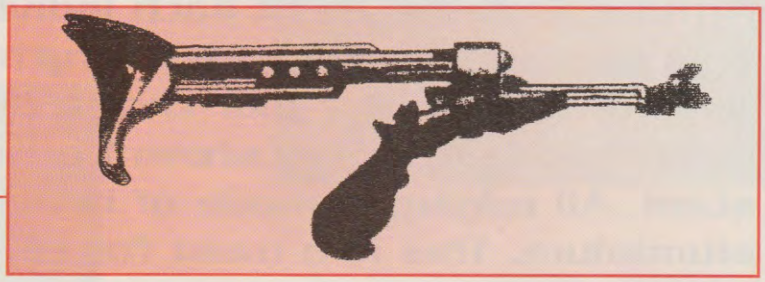
**Code: UN-003-BOHU**



## Alien Disruptor Rifle

**$125.00**

**Code: PX-503-DISR**

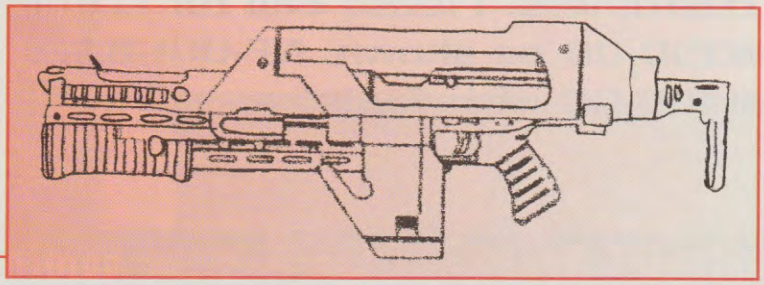


## Pulse Rifle

Perfect for any bug hunt
Available with removable clip and LED readout

**$200.00 for kit.**

**Code: UN-001-PULR**

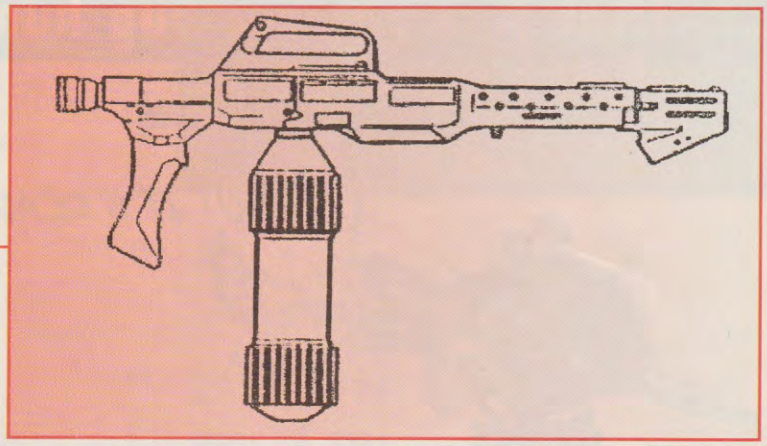


## Flamer Rifle

For quick, easy removal of bug infestations.

**$175.00 for kit.**

**Code: UN-002-FLAR**

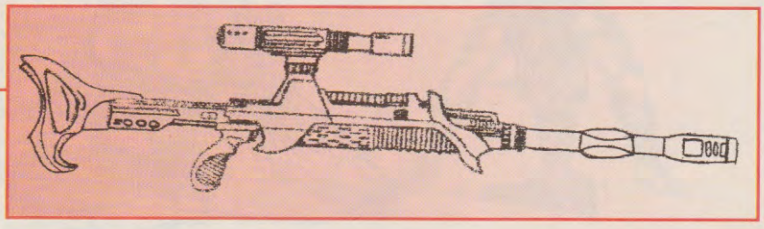


## Alien Sniper Rifle

Over 3 feet of fire power.
As seen in ST6.

**$250.00 for kit.**

**Code: UN-004-SNRI**



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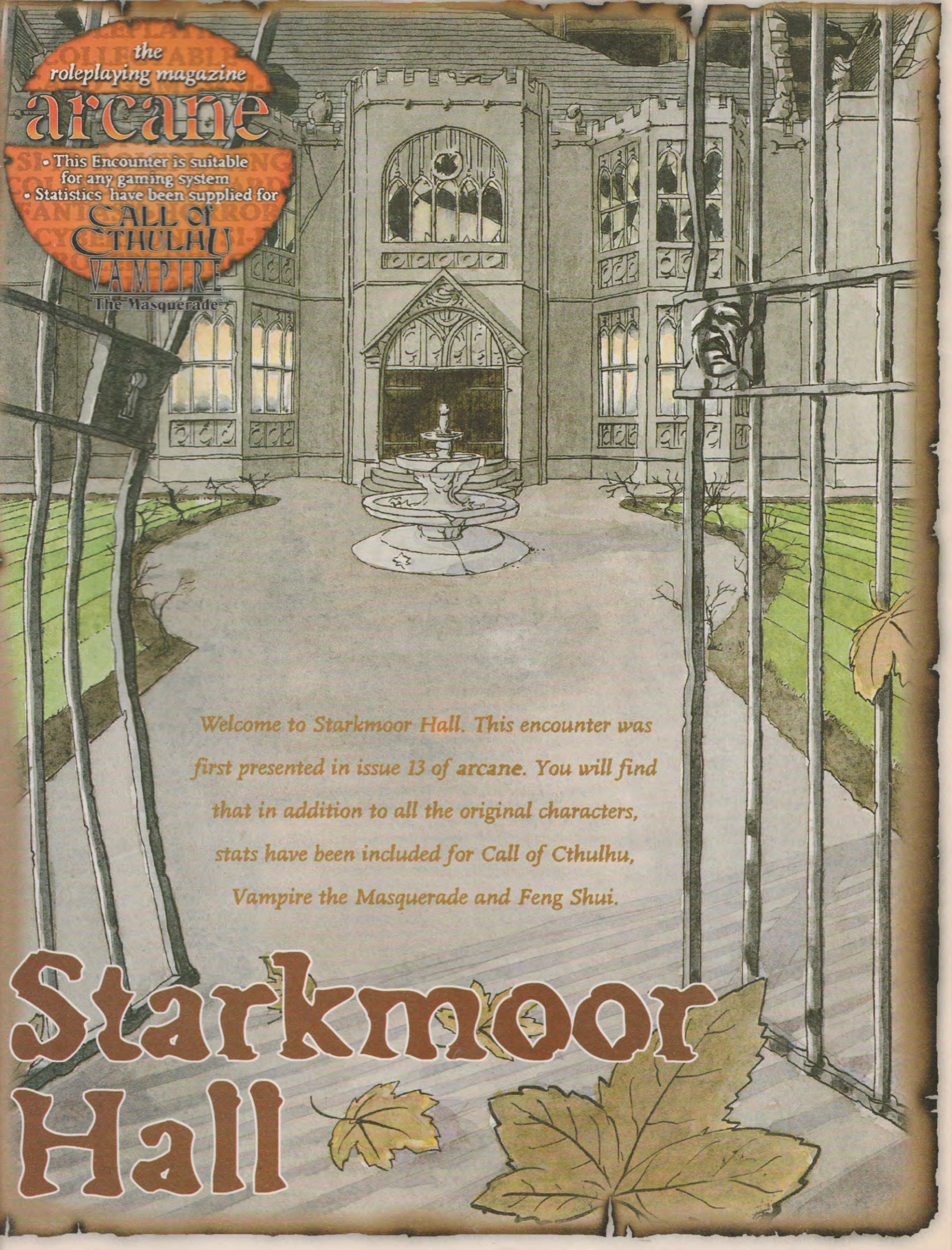


the roleplaying magazine
arcane

- This Encounter is suitable for any gaming system
- Statistics have been supplied for

CALL of CTHULHU
VAMPIRE
The Masquerade

*Welcome to Starkmoor Hall. This encounter was first presented in issue 13 of* **arcane**. *You will find that in addition to all the original characters, stats have been included for Call of Cthulhu, Vampire the Masquerade and Feng Shui.*

# Starkmoor Hall

> "It looked pleasant enough in the autumn sunlight. A solid, Victorian Gothic mansion, built of the local granite, set in a few acres of carefully-tended gardens. A breeze lifted my hair and blew the drifting leaves about my feet. The last of the flowers in the garden had died, and the first nip of winter was in the air. I walked up the long path between the low hedges and manicured lawns. Yes, it looked pleasant enough... but the windows were dark, like black holes, reflecting nothing of the blue autumn sky. The wind grew colder, and a dark cloud blotted out the sun. There was no glass in the windows, and the rooms looked black and empty. A bird croaked above – I looked up at the first floor window and saw a raven looking at me quizzically from the sill, its head on one side. Behind it, through the window, I could see charred roof-beams silhouetted against the dark clouds of a gathering storm. I walked up the last few steps to the oak front door, my boot-heels crunching on broken glass. As I reached out to the brass handle, the door swung open. The first cold drops of rain were beginning to fall as I stepped inside, a wooden stake in my hand, and a crucifix heavy on my breast."

# Starkm

## *Sling the garlic necklace around your shoulders a*

Starkmoor Hall is a ruined mansion with a secret – it is the lair of a small group of vampires, who prey on the local villagers. Some of the villagers know the secret but do not see the need to tell outsiders. But trouble is brewing – one of the younger vampires wants to be rid of her ancient and evil master, and a band of vampire hunters has just arrived in the area, sharpened stakes at the ready.

The mansion could be placed anywhere in Britain, but is probably best located in wild moorland. Somewhere near Whitby would provide an ideal setting, but most important of all, it should not be located too near civilisation.

## Vampires

Blood-drinking vampires have been feared in Europe for many centuries. This encounter is designed for vampire PCs, vampire hunters who know about vampires, or for innocents who slowly discover the true nature of the vampires. Various superstitious beliefs about vampires exist. Some may be killed only by a stake through the heart, others need to sleep by day in their underground coffins. If the PCs are not vampires, let the players know as many of these as they like, but do not confirm which are true for the background except as the characters discover the facts. There is nothing better for horror than having something the character has counted on for protection – a clove of garlic or holy water, for example – prove to be completely useless.

### Vampire superstitions

*(These may or may not prove to be true at the refs discretion.)*

### Vampires cannot:

Endure daylight
Endure garlic
Endure the sight of a crucifix
Endure holy water
Be killed except with a sharpened stick
Cross running water
Be seen in mirrors
Leave their coffin in daylight
Sleep except in their individual coffin, which is kept underground
Sleep except in the soil of their homeland
Travel any more than a few miles away from their grave

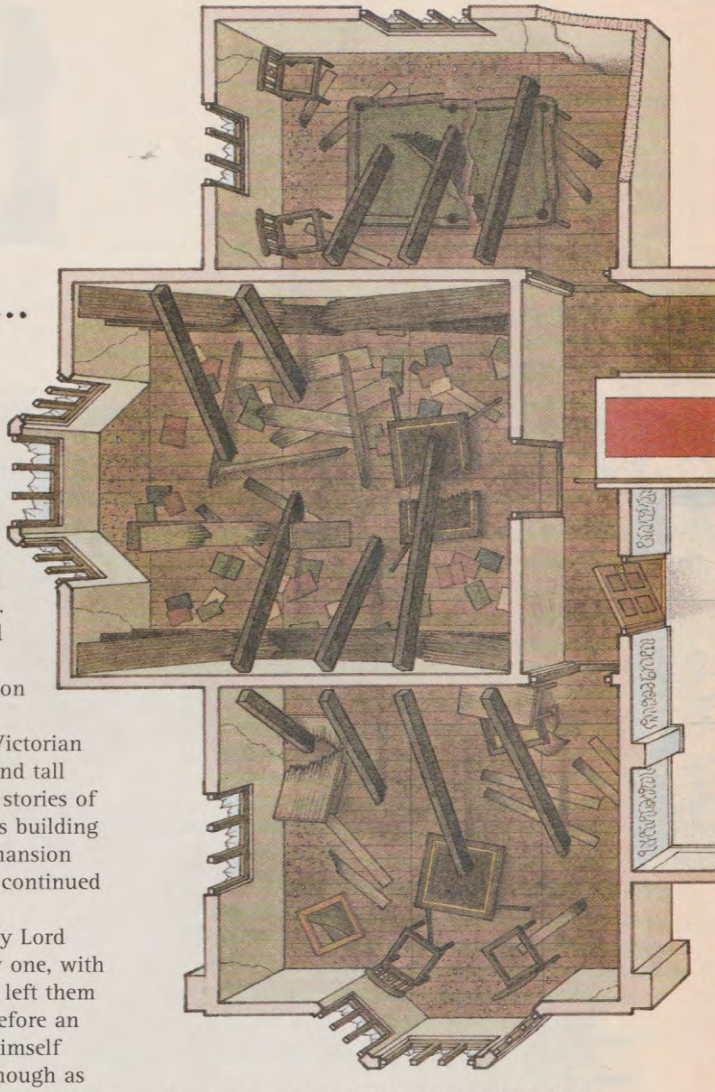
### Vampires must:

Drink blood regularly
Create other vampires

Illustration © arcane by Simon Gurr

# oor Hall

*pproach with trepidation; let the hunt begin...*



## History

No-one knows how the 13th Lord Starkmoor became a vampire. Maybe it was when he was travelling on the continent as a young man in the 1850s – it is said that he visited some of the remoter parts of Eastern Europe. There is no doubt that when he returned home in 1863, to run the estate on the death of his father, he immediately began to change things. His first act on taking over the estate was to begin the construction of a vast folly, but a folly invisible to everyone except invited guests. His folly took the form of a mock catacomb beneath the (then Elizabethan) mansion. Even before the catacombs were finished, there were rumours of mysterious disappearances among the workforce digging the tunnels. No sooner had Starkmoor finished the catacombs, than he began an even grander project: the demolition of the 15th century manor house, and its replacement with a huge Victorian Gothic pile, all narrow windows and tall chimneys. Once again, there were stories of disappearances among the workers building the new mansion. And once the mansion was finished, the uncanny stories continued to circulate.

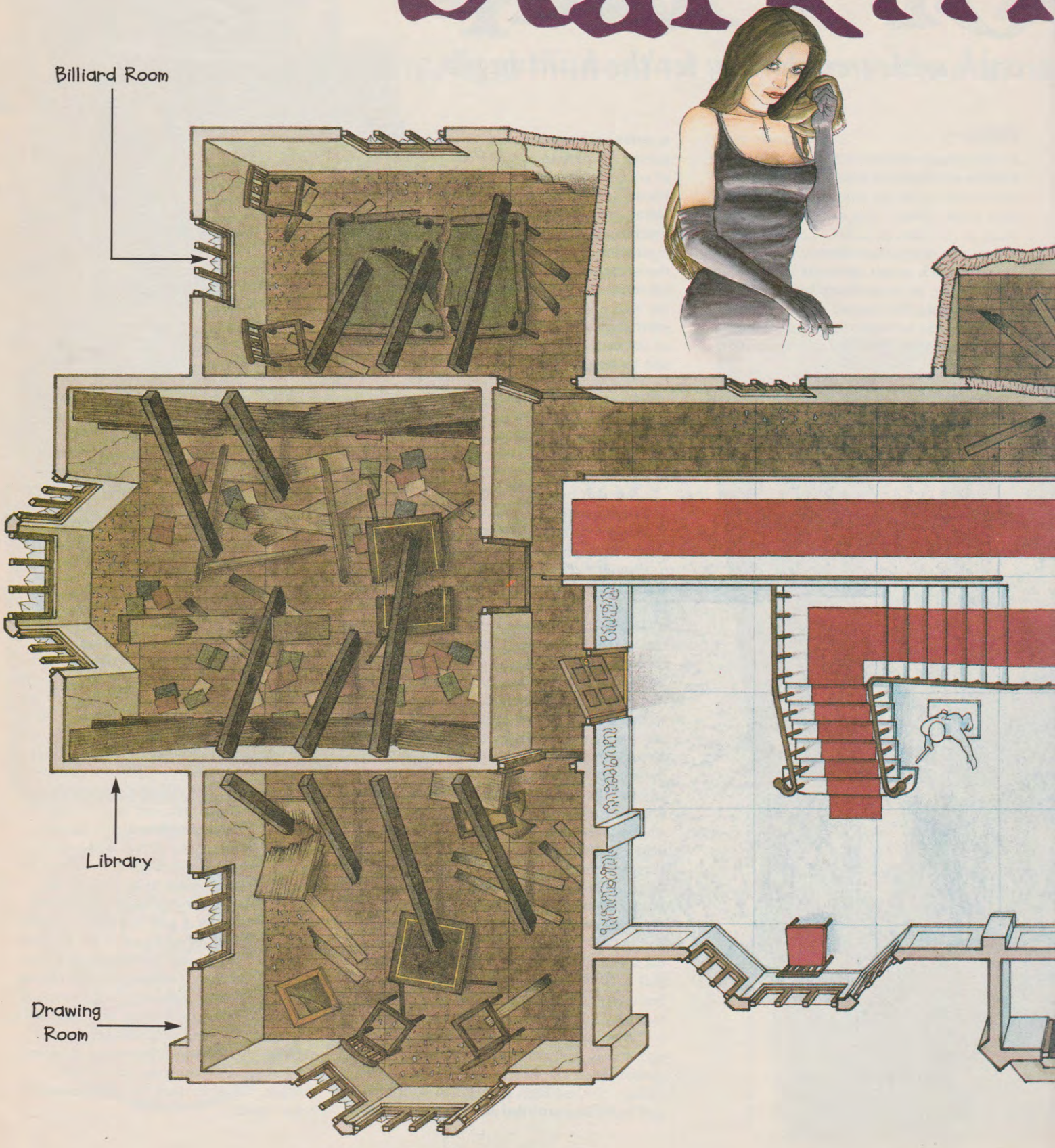
Some of the staff employed by Lord Starkmoor were overcome, one by one, with a strange wasting sickness, which left them pale and feeble for a few weeks before an untimely death. Lord Starkmoor himself seemed to go on living heartily, though as he got older he became more and more ugly – his face an unnatural white, his head completely bald, his ears subtly pointed, his cheeks sunken, his teeth protruding. By the 1920s, the house had such an evil reputation that locals refused to work there, and the staff was reduced to the lord himself and his old and loyal retainer, Bartlett. Then began an unfortunate series of strange deaths in the neighbourhood. People of all ages, male and female, were found dead, all the blood drained from their bodies. Sometimes a sinister figure was seen near the scene of the death, and many witnesses claimed it was Lord Starkmoor himself.

Finally, one dark November night in 1935, the locals could stand it no more. They descended in a mob on Starkmoor Hall, and burned the place down, leaving nothing but a charred shell. A body, presumed to be that of Bartlett, was discovered in the ashes, but mysteriously, Lord Starkmoor himself was never found.

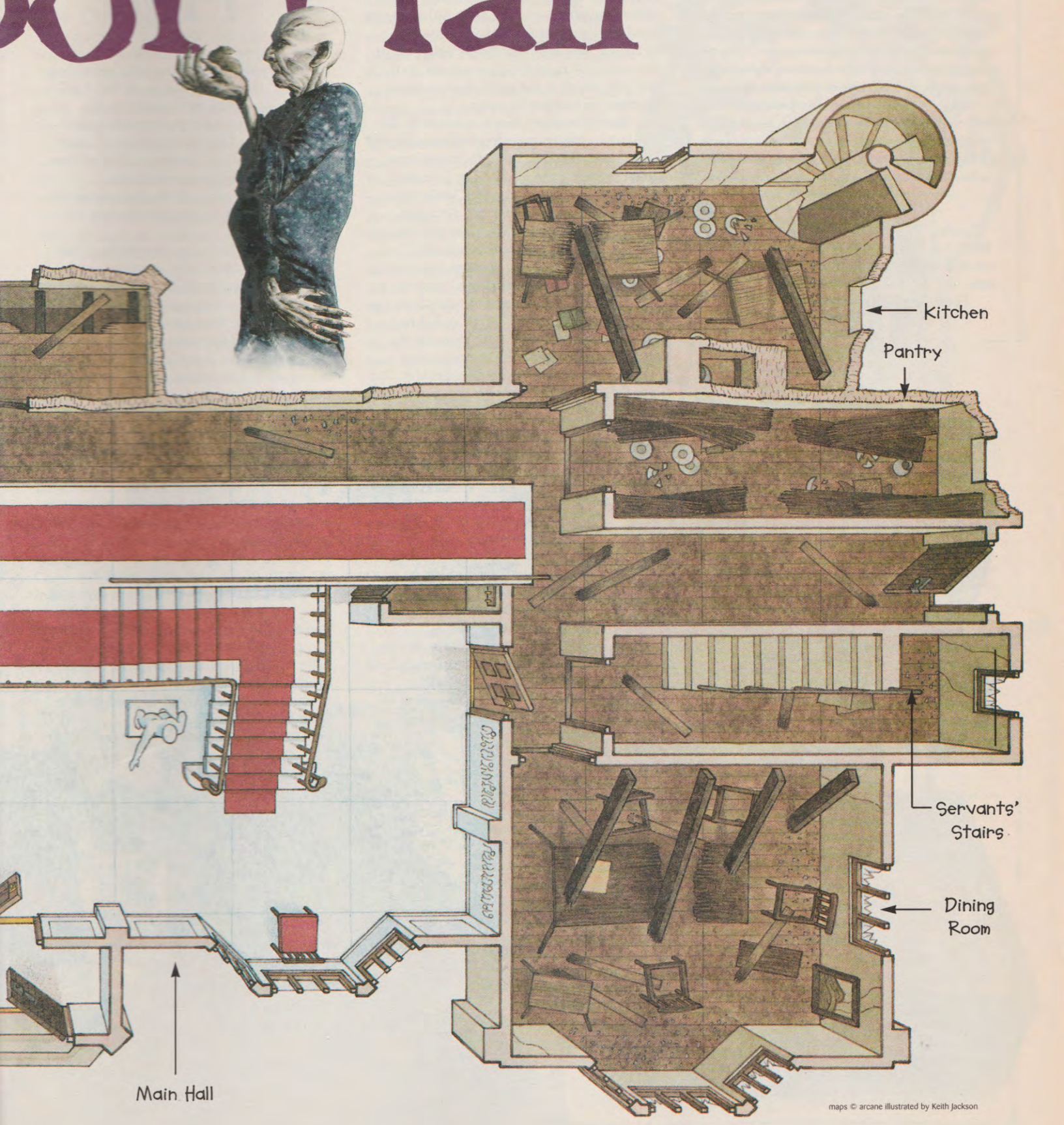
And there matters stayed until two years ago. It was then that a pretty young woman named Helen Marsden arrived in the local village. She had been tracing her family tree, and had discovered she was the only surviving relative (a distant cousin) of the last Lord Starkmoor. She fell in love with the wild beauty of the area and moved into the village. Soon, using her recently deceased parents' fortune (which was made in astute stock-market dealings) she arranged for the grounds of her ancestral home to be cleared and returned to their Victorian splendour, and enthusiastically began the restoration of the house itself.

Soon after the mansion's impressive entrance hall was returned to its former glory, a change came over Helen Marsden. She moved out of the village and back on to the ancestral estate (though quite where, no-one knew). She ceased to be seen in the village, except in the evenings, when she frequented the local pub, the King's Cruelty. She began holding wild parties for the local youths in the restored part of the Hall, and announced that she wished to be known as Lilith Elanor from now on. The parents of the village shook their heads despondently at the stranger's wild ways, and her rather dubious effects on their wayward sons and daughters. Just exuberant youth, they thought, that was, until the disappearances began again...

# Starkm



# oor Hall




maps © arcane illustrated by Keith Jackson

## Young Bartlett

Joseph Bartlett is the son of the old family retainer who died in the fire of 1935. His family has been serving the estate for generations, and Young Bartlett, as he's known to the villagers, now works for Helen Marsden, looking after the grounds of the house. He's an old, wizened little man, with a day's grey stubble on his wrinkled chin and a virtually impenetrable local accent. He's probably mad. During the day, he can be seen in the grounds, pushing a wheelbarrow, or riding about on a motor-mower. He's always safely home before sunset. He'll cheerfully tell anyone who enquires that Miss Marsden disappeared some time ago, but as long as he keeps getting his salary, he'll keep doing the gardening. He's a good source of rumours, but anything he says should be taken with a pinch of salt, and he's not above saying what he thinks his listener wants to hear.

**Quote: "They do say, as 'ow there's a monster lives in them ruins. I don't rightly know if it's true, but I goes 'ome early, and I locks me doors at night."**

## The Last Magicians

The Last Magicians is a Goth band which has gained a following in the local area. The group members travel round the country in a black van, emblazoned with a silver pentagram on each side. Although the band is fairly popular and the music generally well received, this is only part of the story – it is, in fact, a cover for their real job, which is the much more sinister business of vampire hunting.

Having recently heard rumours of the mysterious disappearances in the vicinity of Starkmoor Hall, The Last Magicians have come to play a gig at the King's Cruelty, hoping to investigate the Hall while they are there. The lead singer is called Mish, and he doubles up as the band's chief vampire hunter. His girlfriend, Pandora (the band's former drummer), became a vampire, and some time ago he was forced to kill her with a stake through the heart – a memory that refuses to fade for him. The band now has a drum machine called Pandora which is dedicated to her memory, and it is said among The Last Magicians' most faithful fans that when the band is playing particularly well, the drum machine is possessed by the spirit of its former drummer.

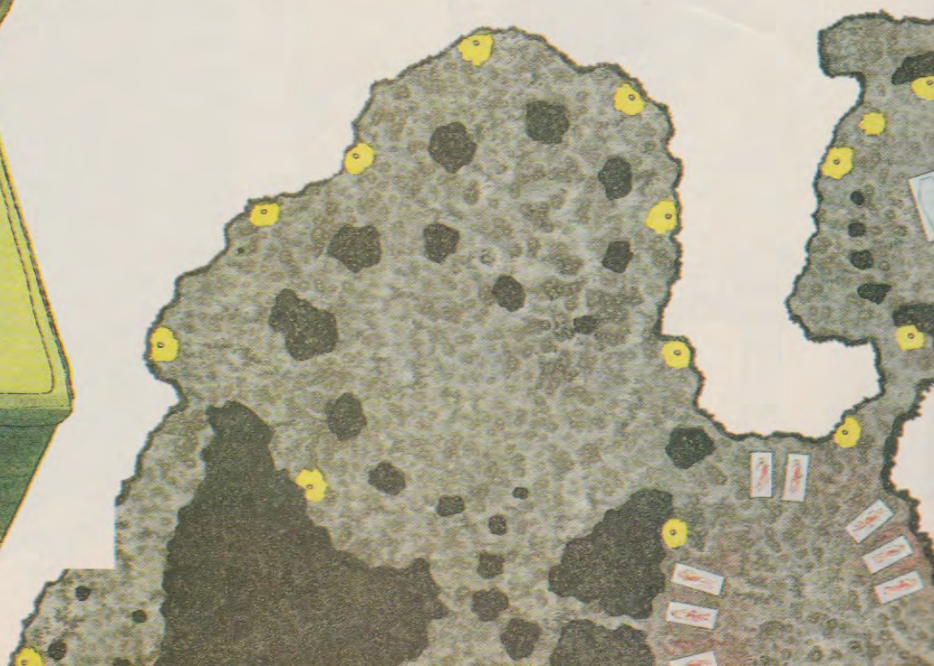
The band's van, as well as containing all their music gear, has an impressive assortment of vampire-hunting equipment, including various stakes, crucifixes, garlic, bibles, bottles of holy water and swords (which are suitable for cutting vampire's heads off – Mish is an expert swordsman).

# Starkmoor Hall

The house itself is a burnt-out shell, and part of the east wing is nothing more than a pile of rubble. Only the main hall has been renovated to its Victorian best (reproduced from old photographs). Most of the rooms are filled with broken masonry, charred beams and floorboards fallen from above, shards of glass and the like. Anything that survived the devastating fire has been ruined by another 60 years of wind and rain.

The main hall is an exception to this rule. Its walls have been repainted, its doors replaced, its marble floor polished. Two great sweeping staircases lead up to a balcony on the floor above. The balcony itself is safe, but anyone stepping off it is likely to find the floors unsafe or even nonexistent. The ceiling above the main hall has been repaired, and a reproduction of the great chandelier which used to hang there has been hung from it. At the bottom of the staircases there are statues of Greek gods, and the walls are highly decorated with fanciful bas-reliefs of ancient Greek gods and heroes. One corner of the room is an enclosed space in which coats and hats can be hung.

Long, polished oak tables are laid along the length of the back wall, under the balcony, and this is where Elanor lays out food and drink when having one of her famous wild parties. A hidden sound system can provide deafeningly loud music at the mere touch of a button, and the chandelier itself has been cunningly designed to function as a multi-coloured laser light show when required.



Although Starkmoor is littered with rubbish, there is no wood anywhere within the confines of the hall. Everything that at first glance looks like wood is either plastic or chipboard.

## The Catacombs

The catacombs were built as a folly, to resemble the underground burial chambers Starkmoor had seen on his European travels. They are partly man-made and partly natural caverns. The walls are rough-hewn, with low arched ceilings, and there are numerous ominous carvings on the walls (death heads, grim reapers and the like). Scattered about the floor are the bones of Starkmoor's many unfortunate victims, and their skulls are to be found in piles, or singly in nooks in the wall, candles perched upon them. More recent bodies are here too, and are neatly laid on slabs in various states of decomposition. The catacombs are a sinister and terrible place. There are two entrances: one, an eerie spiral staircase, leads from the old kitchen of the mansion, the other, a broad marble staircase, leads down from a mock stone mausoleum in the grounds.

Two areas of the catacombs are of special note. These are the living quarters of Elanor and Starkmoor.

## Elanor's Quarters

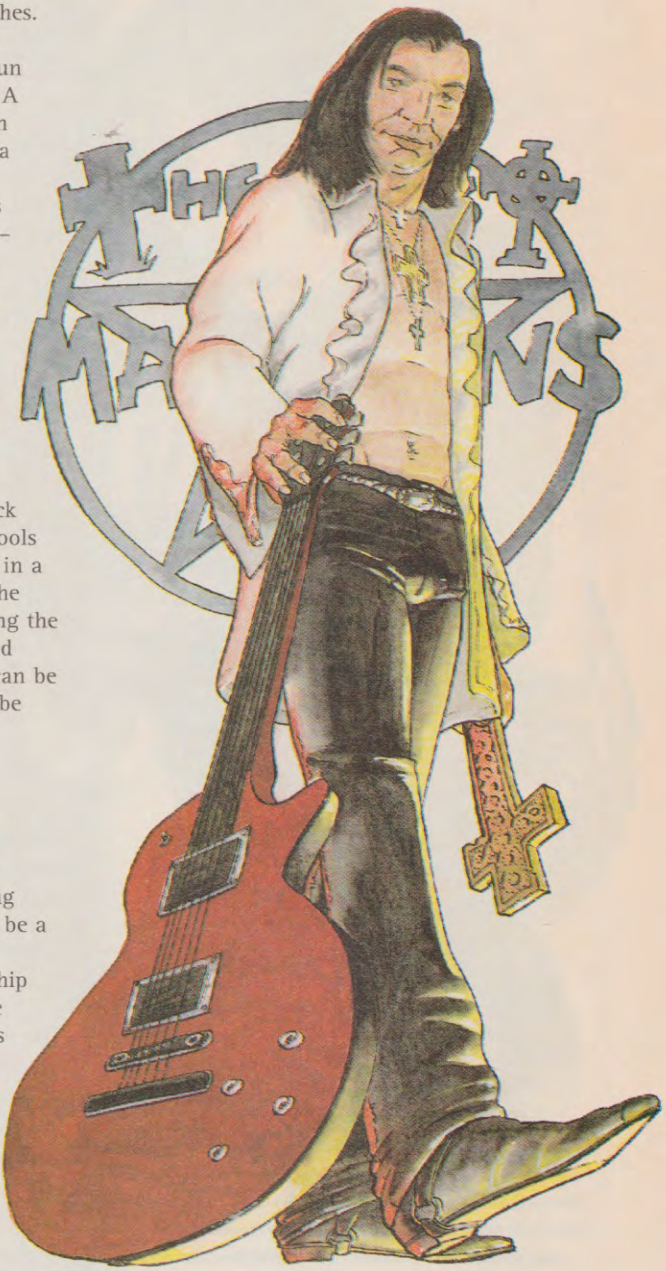
Elanor's quarters are a strange mixture of the traditional and the modern. Elanor has hung the walls with tapestries, silk scarves and Persian rugs, and the place is lit with Chinese lanterns and many black candles. Incense burns constantly, giving the cave an exotic fragrance. A large four-poster bed stands in the middle of the room, hung about with dark red curtains. A big Victorian wardrobe houses her extensive collection of clothes. At the end of the room is a huge, old leather-topped desk, and on it sits a Sun Workstation, with full Internet access. A top-of-the-range hi-fi system is hidden behind one of the wall hangings, and a wide-screen television can be found behind another. Everything in Elanor's quarters is in a kind of ordered chaos – there are lots of books, clothes, CDs and disks in piles about the place, but everything is very clean.

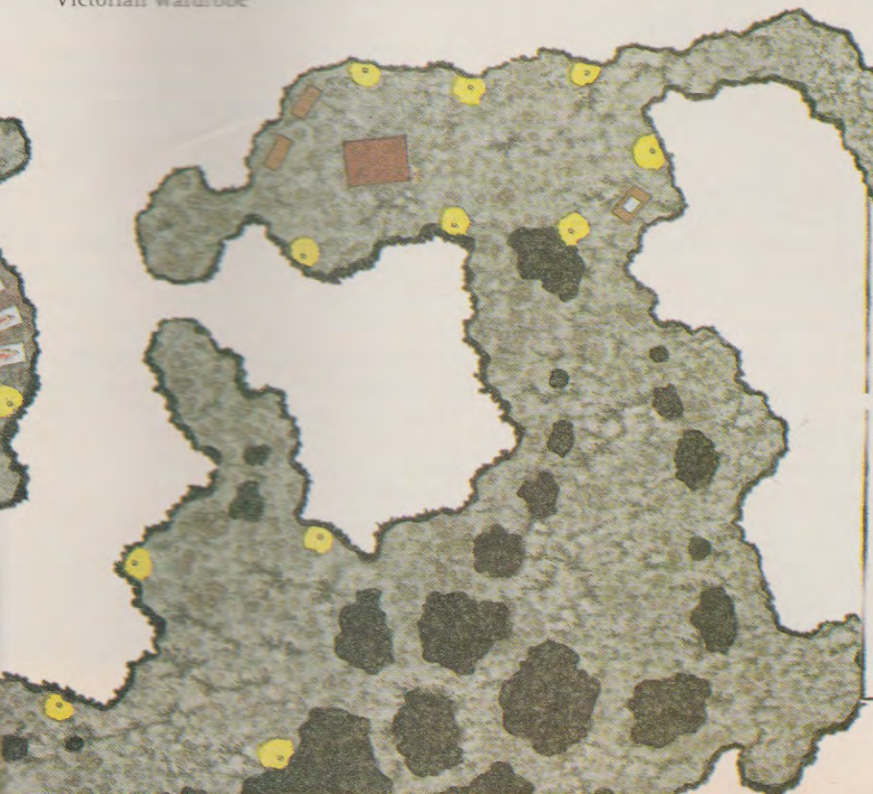
## Starkmoor's Quarters

The Lord's quarters is a charnel-house. A row of slabs has bodies laid out on them, piles of bones lie in the corners, and a pyramid of skulls forms a stand for a group of huge black candles, whose wax drips down and pools on the floor. Starkmoor himself sleeps in a marble sarcophagus in the middle of the mess. Rats scurry about and root among the bones, and the room reeks of death and decay. Manacles attached to the wall can be used for chaining up live prisoners to be feasted on later.

# Next month

In the next issue of **arcane** we're taking you off to investigate what appears to be a strange body of gas floating in outer space. Already there have been spaceship disappearances in the area, and you've been commissioned to work out what's going on. The truth, when it comes, will shock you to the core. Get the next month's Encounter in **arcane** 14, on sale Friday 29th November.



## Mish

Mish, The Last Magicians' lead singer, is a handsome man in his mid-20s, with a mischievous grin and a fanatical hatred of vampires. His hair is long and slightly unkempt, and he usually wears jeans and an open shirt, because he thinks that's what rock 'n' roll stars do. He has big plans for The Last Magicians, but these are usually scuppered by his obsession with tracking down vampires. After the death of his former girlfriend, Pandora, Mish has become much more serious in his outlook on life, but the band's many fans just put this down to musical maturity. It's true that Mish doesn't want The Last Magicians to be typecast as just another struggling band, playing at various pubs up and down the country because nowhere bigger will take them, but it has to be said that the group members haven't exactly hit the big time. Mish has more musical talent than the others, and there are rumours among the fans that he might strike out on his own and start a solo career.

**Quote: (from one of The Last Magicians' more popular songs) "Don't be afraid... to die in my embrace... There's no need to be scared."**

## Lilith Elanor

Elanor (as she is known to her friends) is also a vampire. Stunningly attractive, she charms all who meet her with her sweet smile and enthusiastic personality. She has long, dark brown hair and a pale face. Her eyes are usually hidden behind small, round, dark glasses. She is always impeccably dressed, often in a black flowing dress and a blue-grey airforce officer's jacket. She wears a pendant around her neck in the form of a silver sword, about two inches long. When met in the King's Cruelty, she is usually found with a pint of cider in one hand and a cigar in the other. The local youths think she is incredibly cool – all the girls try to emulate her dress sense and the boys are all madly in love with her. Many of these youths know that she is a vampire – such is her charm that they tell no-one, and indeed consider it a great thrill to be chosen to have some of their blood drunk by her. She never drains enough to cause lasting harm to her followers, and her parties at Starkmoor Hall are considered *the* place to be. Her great secret is the sword pendant around her neck. If seriously threatened, she can transform this into a four foot-long broad-sword, which she wields with devastating skill. Vampire hunters, beware!

**Quote: "Just time for another drink..."**

# Scenario Seeds

### Before the Fire

A historical game set in Starkmoor Hall when Lord Starkmoor is still actively preying on his staff. This could include PCs as visitors to the Hall, or as servants, and would involve slowly discovering the Lord's horrific secret and confronting him, possibly climaxing with the burning down of the Hall.

### Dungeons

In a fantasy game, the catacombs could be used as a dungeon, and there would probably be a real cave system somewhere in the mountains. They would be inhabited by many vampire minions, hell-hounds, bats and so on, and Lord Starkmoor would be a vampire lord of extremely evil repute, whom the characters must endeavour to dispose of. Alternatively, the PCs could come out of a deep dungeon into the catacombs under the house as a way of moving, without the transition from a fantasy world into the real world being too fast.

### Medieval Vampires

In a historical game, the house could be replaced by a castle (maybe The Keep from arcane 6 – turn to page 53 if you missed it). Lord Starkmoor would be able to behave much more openly, in the manner of Dracula, perhaps. Elanor would be a more sinister figure, doing her Lord's work willingly and without questioning his authority, and the locals could be terrified and superstitious peasants.

### Obsession

Lilith Elanor has been a vampire for a long time, and the reason she hates Lord Starkmoor is because he killed her lover in a vicious attack. From time to time she finds someone who vaguely resembles him, and becomes completely obsessed with him. This person could be a PC, who may be flattered to receive the attention of this beautiful woman. Alternatively, it could be an important NPC. Although she is a vampire, she will neither harm her lover nor turn him into a vampire. The same is not true of any friends of his who try to separate them. Her desire is to re-enact what happened with her original lover, but this time with Lord Starkmoor being the one who ends up dead. This sort of plot is probably best begun slowly in the midst of a lot of other events, with rumours of disappearances and so on slowly increasing the level of suspense.

# The Adventure

A complex situation is developing around Starkmoor Hall. A group of disparate characters are manoeuvring for power.

Elanor has recently been getting sick of the ruthless bloodthirst of Lord Starkmoor. She would rather be rid of him, but lacks the power to kill him on her own. She intends to lure someone more capable to the Hall in the hope that this person can kill him instead. She has planned one of her parties for tonight, and is hoping that someone there can help her defeat the nosferatu.

Lord Starkmoor, for his part, is equally sick of Elanor. In his long torpor, he has lost what little humanity he may once have had, and wishes only to go on a killing spree. Elanor tells him that in the modern age he will be tracked down easily, and he must be more subtle. He has decided to reveal himself at the party tonight and turn as many victims as possible into vampires, in the hope that they will be his willing servants. As his bloodlust rises in anticipation of this feast, his last shreds of humanity vanish, and he becomes a bestial killing machine.

Mish and The Last Magicians have a shrewd idea that there is a vampire or vampires at the Hall, and intend to investigate and kill any they find.

### The PCs

The players could be allied to any of the factions. They could be:

– vampires who are loyal to Lord Starkmoor. If this is the case, they could be quite old and powerful vampires. They may wish to join Starkmoor's feast, or they may wish to stop him in order to preserve their own anonymity.

– younger vampires, allied to Lilith Elanor. They will almost certainly be on her side in the coming conflict. They will probably have become aware of their true nature relatively recently, and may still be learning the extent of their powers and abilities.

– members of The Last Magicians, seeking to infiltrate the vampires' lair and hunt down the evil bloodsuckers.

– local youngsters, looking for a good time at their beloved Elanor's party, little expecting the horror in which they are to be thrown.

– innocent visitors (tourists perhaps?) who happen to be in the pub and get invited to the party at Starkmoor Hall, having not the slightest idea that there are vampires about.

– friends of Helen Marsden from before she became a vampire, either just passing through and going to visit, or trying to find out what has happened to her.

## The King's Cruelty

The adventure starts in the King's Cruelty, where Elanor is holding court with her young admirers. She buys drinks for all and sundry, and moves constantly among the crowd, bestowing a smile here, a hug there, and a word of sympathy to the maudlin drunk in the corner. She's obviously the life and soul of the party. When The Last Magicians start to play, she immediately begins to dance, encouraging others to do so. It soon becomes obvious to anyone with any empathy that Elanor and Mish are attracted to each other, and their eyes meet again and again as the evening wears on. At this point, Mish has no idea that she is a vampire, and she has no idea that he is a vampire hunter. When the band finishes playing and last orders are called, Elanor immediately rushes up to congratulate the band, hugging them all and inviting them to her party. She invites everyone in the pub to come along, and a trail of happy, drunken and unsuspecting people meander out of the pub and up the country lane towards the fateful mansion house.

If the PCs know nothing of what's going on, they should hear dark hints from the locals while in the pub. The older people in the pub will frown at Elanor and call her a bad influence, and mutter darkly about bad blood in the family and, "look what happened to the old Lord". This is the time to tell the chilling tale of Starkmoor Hall. The youngsters, on the other hand, will have nothing but praise for Elanor and her "really cool" mansion.

## The Party

The party has already been prepared by Elanor. Food and drink is laid on in the renovated entrance to the mansion. If the PCs are seeing the Hall for the first time at night, they will probably not realise that it is ruined, though the lack of lights may be a tad disconcerting. The wide curving staircases lead to the upper floor, which has large holes in it. Anyone creeping up in the dark (perhaps looking for the bathroom, or vampire hunting) stands a chance of a nasty accident, or at least a fright.

At some point early on in the party, Elanor will take someone through the rear doors of the room, to drain a little blood. This could be one of the youngsters, or maybe one of the PCs. It will look like a little flirtation to anyone else – some hugging, some giggling, and slipping out the back to be on their own for a while. Mish is watching Elanor carefully – he's starting to get suspicious. He'll also be watching any other (PC) vampires present.

If any of the PCs go looking for Lord Starkmoor, they'll find him in the catacombs. It's very dark down there, and Starkmoor knows his way around better than anyone else. A game of cat-and-mouse will ensue, with Starkmoor doubling back down passages and picking off stragglers in the PC group. If the PCs call for help, or you think they need it, Elanor will turn up and help them fight Starkmoor. In doing so, she will reveal her vampiric powers, and it will be up to the PCs to decide how to treat her.

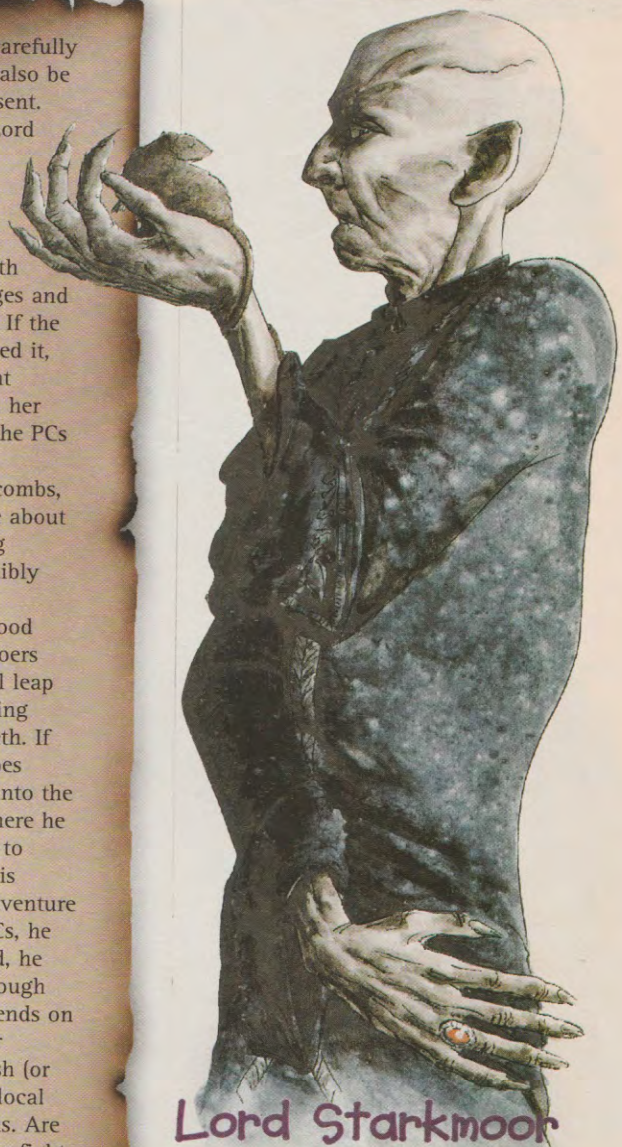
If no-one goes searching the catacombs, Lord Starkmoor will make his entrance about an hour after the party begins, walking silently down the staircase. He's incredibly ugly, and his eyes burn with a red malevolence. This is obviously not a good guy, whichever side you're on. Party-goers will begin to panic, and Starkmoor will leap from the staircase into their midst, killing indiscriminately with his claws and teeth. If the fight with whoever opposes him goes badly, he will turn into a bat and flee into the catacombs, making for his quarters, where he keeps a live victim chained to the wall to provide him with fresh blood. It is in his quarters that the grand finale of the adventure takes place. He may be killed by the PCs, he may be killed by Elanor with her sword, he may be killed by Mish with a stake through the heart. What happens after that depends on the party. Elanor will have revealed her vampirism during the evening, and Mish (or the PCs) may want to kill her too. The local youngsters will do their best to stop this. Are vampire-hunting PCs ruthless enough to fight through the teenagers to kill their prey?

## Inspiration

The classic vampire novel is, of course, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Another classic is Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (handily collected in the excellent *Penguin Book of Vampires* edited by Alan Ryan). More recent vampire inspiration includes Steven Brust's *Agyar*, Barbara Hambly's *Some of Your Blood*, Stephen King's *Salem's Lot*, Tanith Lee's *Blood of Roses*, Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* and Anne Rice's *Interview with a Vampire* and sequels.

Films worth seeing include Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, *Interview with a Vampire*, *Nosferatu* and *The Lost Boys*.

Suitable sources of vampiric roleplaying include, *Chill* (Mayfair Games), *GURPS Blood Types*, *GURPS Horror* and *GURPS Vampire: The Masquerade* (Steve Jackson Games); *AD&D Ravenloft* (TSR) and *Vampire: The Masquerade* and *Vampire: The Dark Ages* (White Wolf).



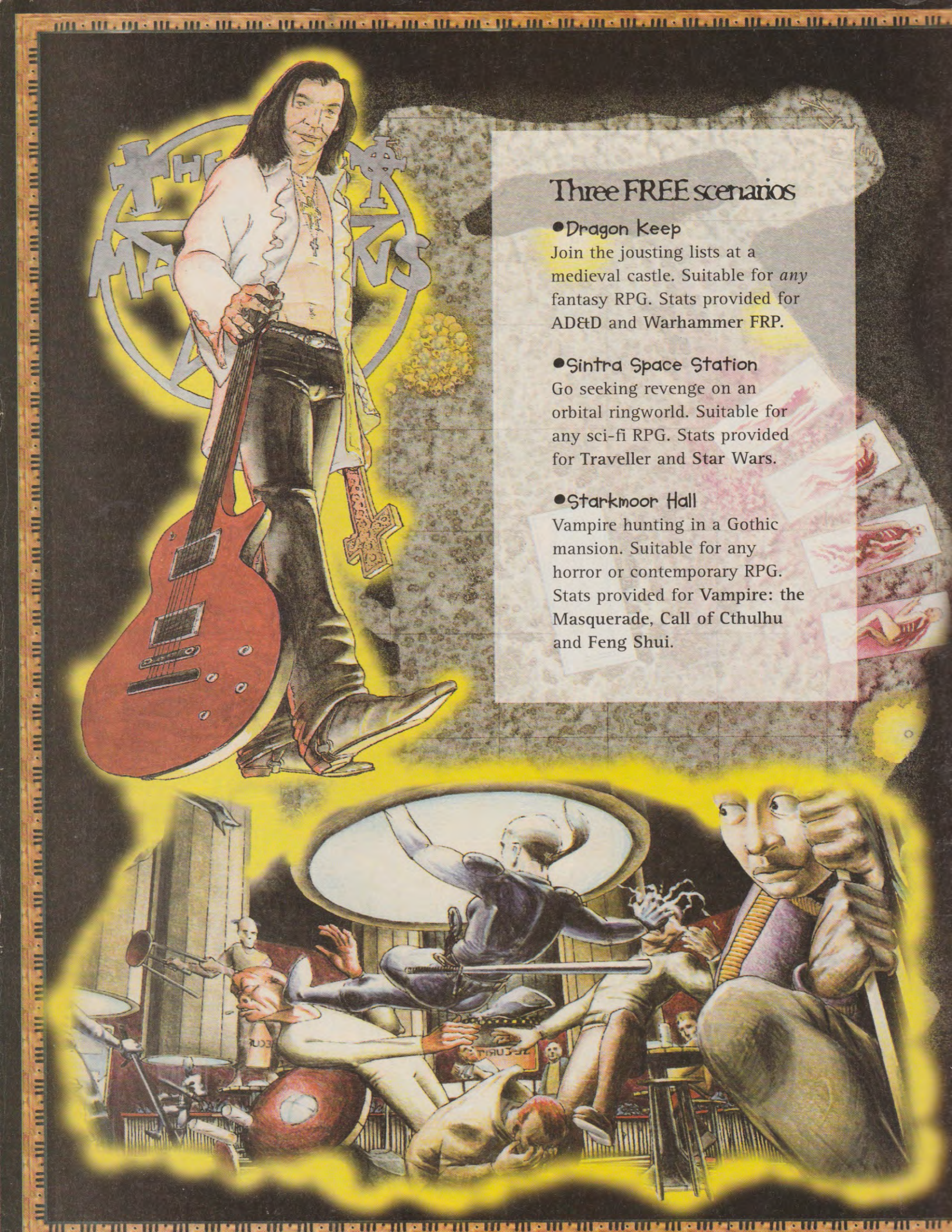
## Lord Starkmoor

When the local villagers burned down Starkmoor Hall, Lord Starkmoor, a type of vampire known to some as Nosferatu, hid in the catacombs beneath the house. The collapse of part of the mansion trapped him inside. Without his supply of blood he fell into a torpor, until found again by Helen Marsden when the house was being renovated. He drained the unsuspecting young woman of blood and turned her into a vampire like himself. Starkmoor is an old and evil vampire, lacking in any sense of morals, who sees his victims as nothing more than food. Immensely ugly and strong, he has the ability to turn himself into a bat, and can also command small animals such as rats and ravens to spy for him and attack unwanted visitors in swarms. When Elanor holds her parties, he often watches through the eyes of one of these creatures for a likely source of blood. When one takes his fancy, he will follow the unfortunate victim, wait until he or she is alone, then suck its blood until it is dead. He puts the body in his catacombs, together with the victims of his previous feedings – a grisly reminder to himself of his ungodly powers.

**Quote: "Such perfect skin. It seems a pity to break it."**

Lord Starkmoor's Quarters

STARKMOOR HALL
Stairs to
rock Mausoleum
Lord Starkmoor's
Quarters
Elanor's
Quarters
Hole to
lower Cabins
Stairs to Kitchen



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